

A N
A C C O U N T
O F T H E
M U S I C A L P E R F O R M A N C E S
I N
W E S T M I N S T E R - A B B E Y ,
A N D T H E
P A N T H E O N ,
M a y 26th, 27th, 29th ; and J u n e the 3d, and 5th, 1784.
I N
C O M M E M O R A T I O N
O F
H A N D E L .

By CHARLES BURNEY, Mus.D. F.R.S.

— All
The multitude of Angels, with a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy, heav'n rung
With jubilee, and loud Hosannas fill'd
Th' eternal regions.

MILT. PARAD. LOST, Book III.

D U B L I N :

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MDCCCLXXXV.

A C O U N T

TO THE

MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

KESTRINIAN

T A N T H O M



COMMEMORATION

AREATNESS of mind is never
more within a looking glass
more honestly revealed than
in a looking glass. The regions of
the mind are not by any means
the same as the regions of the
body. The mind is not a
thing, but a power. It is not
a substance, but a faculty. It is
not a part of the body, but a
power of the soul. It is not a
thing, but a power. It is not
a substance, but a faculty. It is
not a part of the body, but a
power of the soul.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
H. WHITTINGTON
M. DECISION

TO THE
K I N G.

GREATNESS of mind is never more willingly acknowledged, nor more sincerely revered, than when it descends into the regions of general life, and by countenancing common pursuits, or partaking common amusements, shews that it borrows nothing from distance or formality.

By the notice which Your Majesty has been pleased to bestow upon the celebration of HANDEL's memory,

DEDICATION.

You have condescended to add Your voice to public praise, and give Your sanction to musical emulation.

The delight which Music affords seems to be one of the first attainments of rational nature; wherever there is humanity, there is modulated sound. The mind set free from the resistless tyranny of painful want, employs its first leisure upon some savage melody. Thus in those lands of unprovided wretchedness, which Your Majesty's encouragement of naval investigation has brought lately to the knowledge of the polished world, though all things else were wanted, every nation had its Music; an art of which the rudiments accompany the commencements, and the refinements adorn the completion of civility, in which the inhabitants of the earth seek their first refuge from evil, and, perhaps, may find at last the most elegant of their pleasures.

But that this pleasure may be truly elegant, science and nature must assist

DEDICATION.

assist each other; a quick sensibility of Melody and Harmony, is not always originally bestowed, and those who are born with this susceptibility of modulated sounds, are often ignorant of its principles, and must therefore be in a great degree delighted by chance; but when Your Majesty is pleased to be present at Musical performances, the artists may congratulate themselves upon the attention of a judge in whom all requisites concur, who hears them not merely with instinctive emotion, but with rational approbation, and whose praise of HANDEL is not the effusion of credulity, but the emanation of Science.

How near, or how distant, the time may be, when the art of combining sounds shall be brought to its highest perfection by the natives of Great Britain, this is not the place to enquire; but the efforts produced in other parts of knowledge by Your Majesty's favour, give hopes that Music may make quick advances now
it

DEDICATION.

it is recommended by the attention,
and dignified by the patronage of our
Sovereign.

I am,

With the most profound Humility,

Your MAJESTY's most dutiful

And devoted Subject and Servant,

CHARLES BURNEY.

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P R E F A C E.

A Public and national tribute of gratitude to deceased mortals, whose labours and talents have benefited, or innocently amused, mankind, has, at all times, been one of the earliest marks of civilization in every country emerged from ignorance and barbarism. And there seems no more rational solution of the mysteries of ancient Greek mythology, than to imagine that men, whose virtue and abilities surpassed the common standard of human excellence, had excited that degree of veneration in posterior times, which gave rise to their deification and apotheosis.

Such a gigantic idea of commemoration as the present, for the completion of which it was necessary that so many minds should be concentred, must have been long fostering ere it took a practicable form, and was matured into reality. But from the conception

of this plan to its full growth, there was such a concurrence of favourable circumstances as the records of no art or science can parallel: the Royal Patronage with which it was honoured; the high rank, unanimity, and active zeal of the directors; the leisure, as well as ardour and skill of the conductor; the disinterested docility of individuals; and liberal contributions of the public; all conspired to render this event memorable, and worthy of a place, not only in the annals of Music, but of mankind.

And indeed it was hardly possible for a Musical Historian not to imagine that an enterprize honoured with the patronage and presence of their Majesties; planned and personally directed by noblemen and gentlemen of the first rank; attended by the most numerous and polite audience that was ever assembled on a similar occasion, in any country; among whom, not only the King, Queen, Royal Family, nobility, and great officers of state appeared, but the archbishops, bishops, and other dignified clergy, with the heads of the law, would form an æra in Music, as honourable to the art and to national gratitude, as to the great artist himself who has given occasion to the Festival.

HAN.

HANDEL, whose genius and abilities have lately been so nobly commemorated, though not a native of England, spent the greatest part of his life in the service of its inhabitants: improving our taste, delighting us in the church, the theatre, and the chamber; and introducing among us so many species of musical excellence, that, during more than half a century, while sentiment, not fashion, guided our applause, we neither wanted nor wished for any other standard. He arrived among us at a barbarous period for almost every kind of music, except that of the church. But, besides his oratorio choruses, which are so well intitled to immortality, his organ-pieces, and manner of playing, are still such models of perfection as no master in Europe has surpassed; and his operas were composed in a style so new and excellent, that no Music has since, with all its refinements of melody and symmetry of air, in performance, had such effects on the audience.

Indeed his works were so long the models of perfection in this country, that they may be said to have formed our national taste. For though many in the capital have been partial, of late years, to the compositions of Italy, Germany, and France; yet the nation

at large has rather tolerated than adopted these novelties.

The English, a manly, military race, were instantly captivated by the grave, bold, and nervous style of Handel, which is congenial with their manners and sentiments. And though the productions of men of great genius and abilities have, since his time, had a transient share of attention and favour; yet, whenever any of the works of Handel are revived by a performer of superior talents, they are always heard with a degree of general satisfaction and delight, which other compositions seldom obtain. Indeed, the exquisite manner in which his productions are executed at the concert established for the preservation and performance of old masters, stimulates a desire in all who hear them to have a more general acquaintance with his works. And it was, perhaps, at the late performance in Westminster Abbey, that the compositions of this great master were first supplied with a band, capable of displaying all the wonderful powers of his harmony.

Pope, more than forty years ago, imagining that his band was more numerous than modern times had ever seen or heard before, contented

contented himself with calling him *Centimanus*, where he says :

Strong in new arms, lo ! Giant HANDEL stands,
Like bold Briareus with his *hundred hands*.

But if our great bard had survived the late Commemoration, when the productions of Handel employed more than five hundred voices and instruments, he would, perhaps, have lost a pun, a simile, and a *bon mot*, for want of a classical allusion to lean on.

Notwithstanding the frequent complaints that are made of the corruption of Music, of public caprice, and private innovation, there is, perhaps, no country in Europe, where the productions of old masters are more effectually preserved from oblivion, than in England : for, amidst the love of novelty and rapid revolutions of fashion, in common with other countries, our cathedrals continue to perform the services and full anthems of the 16th and 17th centuries, by Tye, Tallis, Bird, Morley, Gibbons, Humphrey, Blow, and Purcell ; as well as those produced at the beginning of the present century, by Wise, Clarke, Crofts, and others, whose grave and learned compositions have contributed to keep harmony, and the ancient choral style, from corruption and decay. The Crown and Anchor Concert, established in 1710, for the preservation

preservation of old masters of every country, has long endeavoured to check innovation ; and the annual performances at St. Paul's, for the benefit of the Sons of the Clergy ; the Madrigal Society, as well as the Catch-Club, and Concert of Ancient Music, are all more peculiarly favourable to the works of the illustrious dead, than those of living candidates for fame.

But the most honourable eulogium that can be bestowed on the power of Music is, that whenever the human heart is wished to expand in charity and benevolence, its aid is more frequently called in, than that of any other art or advocate: as the delight it affords in exchange for superfluous wealth, is not only the most exquisite which the wit of man can supply, but the most innocent that a well-governed state can allow.

Indeed Handel's Church-Music has been kept alive, and has supported life in thousands, by its performance for charitable purposes : as at St. Paul's for the Sons of the Clergy ; at the Triennial Meetings of the Three Choirs of Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester ; at the two Universities of Oxford and Cambridge ; at the Benefit Concerts for decayed Musicians and their Families ; at the Foundling Hospital ; at St. Margaret's Church

Church for the Westminster Infirmary; and for Hospitals and Infirmaries in general, throughout the kingdom, which have long been indebted to the art of Music, and to Handel's Works in particular, for their support.

This will not only account for the zeal of individuals in propagating his fame, but alacrity of the nation at large, in supporting an enterprize calculated to do honour to the memory of so great an artist, and extensive a benefactor.

From all the information with which my musical reading and inquiries have furnished me, it seems not too much to say, that the musicians assembled on this occasion exceeded in abilities, as well as number, those of every band that has been collected in modern times: as may be reasonably inferred from the following chronological list of the most remarkable musical musters upon record.

At an interview between Francis I. king of France, and Pope Leo X. in 1515, at Bologna in Italy, the musicians and singers of the French king and the Roman pontiff meeting together, formed the most numerous band which had ever been incorporated in those times. The number, however, is not mentioned; but as the chapel and court establishment of those princes could never, when united,

united, form a body of musicians sufficiently considerable to put in competition with that lately assembled, the number may still remain indefinite, without leaving the least doubt of its superiority.

On the cessation of the plague at Rome, in the early part of the last century, a mass composed by Benevoli, for six choirs, of four parts each, was performed in St. Peter's church, of which he was maestro di capella; and the singers, amounting to *more than two hundred*, were arranged in different circles of the dome: the sixth choir occupying the summit of the cupola. On both these occasions no instruments seem to have been employed, but the organ.

We are told in Bonnet's *Hist. de la Musique* (a), that the *Te Deum*, which Lulli had composed for the recovery of Lewis XIV. in 1686, was afterwards performed at Paris, on the recovery of his eldest son, Monseigneur, by *three hundred musicians*.

In the year 1723, most of the great musicians of Europe were assembled together in the city of Prague, by order of the emperor Charles VI. to celebrate the festival of his being crowned king of Bohemia. History, says Quantz (the late celebrated performer on

(a) Tom. II. p. 93.

the German flute, and master of the present king of Prussia), does not furnish a more glorious event for music, than this solemnity; nor a similar instance of so great a number of eminent professors, of any one art, being collected together. Upon this occasion, there was an opera performed in the open air, by *a hundred voices, and two hundred instruments (a)*.

A solemn service was performed at the funeral of Rameau, 1767, at the church of the Oratory, in Paris, by all the musicians of the king's band, and by those of the Royal Academy of Music, united. On this occasion we are told (*b*), that many pieces from Rameau's best productions were selected, which drew tears from several that were present, by the excellence of the music, and the melancholy occasion on which it was performed.

At *Santa Chiara*, in Naples, about the same time, according to Signor Corri, who was then in that city studying under the famous Porpora, near *three hundred musicians* were employed at the last consecration of a nun of great distinction.

(a) *Herrn Johann Joachim Quantzens Lebenslauf, von ihm selbst entworfen.* Published by Marpurg at Berlin, 1754. See likewise *Musical Tour*, vol. ii. p. 177.

(b) *Essai sur la Mus.* tom. III. p. 465.

And

And at the public funeral of Jomelli, in the same city, 1774, a like number was assembled together, in order to pay their last duty to that great master; and these not only performed *gratis*, but contributed to the necessary expences of this solemn service (a).

At many other *gran funzioni* and festivals in Rome, Venice, and other parts of Italy, a congress of *two or three hundred musicians* is not, perhaps, very uncommon; but from the time that the present system of harmony was invented, to this period, no well-authenticated instance, I believe, could be produced, of *five hundred* performers, vocal and instrumental, being consolidated into one body, and giving such indisputable proofs of talents and discipline, as on the late occasion.

Indeed the fortunate arrival of Madame Mara in this country, while the manner of celebrating the intended festival was in contemplation, eased the directors and conductor of much anxiety and difficulty, as to the distribution of the songs. There were, at this time, but few great singers in London who stood high in the favour of the public; and those were either inaccessible, or apprehen-

(a) *Saggio di Poesie Latine ed Italiane di Saverio Mattei.*
In Napoli, 1774.

five that a single voice, of whatever volume, would be inaudible, in such an immense building as Westminster-Abbey. The voluntary offer therefore of this admirable singer to perform at each exhibition, and the liberty granted by the managers of the Pantheon, to whom she was exclusively engaged, gave birth to hopes from single songs, which were greatly surpassed, in effect, on the day of performance. Indeed, the most sanguine promoters of this enterprize, must at first have imagined, that the chief difference and superiority of these performances to all others, would have arisen from the aggregate of sounds produced by so immense a band, in the choruses. But the effects were not rendered more new, grand, and surprising, by the united force of the whole, than sweet, distinct, and audible, by the single efforts of individuals. The knowledge, experience, and abilities of the two alternate leaders of this Musical Legion, Mess. Hay and Cramer, were never more manifest, nor were their orders ever more implicitly obeyed, than on this great and trying occasion.

Indeed, the effects of this amazing band, not only overset all the predictions of ignorance and sarcasm, but the conjectures of theory

theory and experience. By some it was predicted, that an orchestra so numerous could never be *in tune* ; but even *tuning*, to so noble an organ, was, for once, grand, and productive of pleasing sensations. By some it was thought that, from their number and distance, they would never play *in time* ; which, however, they did most accurately, and without the measure being beat in the usual clumsy manner. By others it was expected that the band would be so *loud*, that whoever heard this performance, would never hear again ; however, the sound of these multiplied tones arrived as mild and benign at the ears of the audience, as if it had been produced by a few select performers, in a common concert-room. And, lastly, that from the immense size of the building, no *single voice* had the least chance of being heard by those who had places remote from the orchestra ; but, luckily, this was so far from being true, that not a vocal breathing, however feeble by nature, or softened by art, was inaudible in any part of the immense space through which it diffused itself in all directions.

All these difficulties, real and imaginary, were happily obviated by Mr. Commissioner Bates, the CONDUCTOR of this great enterprise ;

prize ; for this gentleman, who had so long made the various works of so great and fertile a genius his particular study, selected the pieces, collected, collated, and corrected the books ; and, with a diligence and zeal, which nothing but enthusiasm could inspire, after the idea was suggested, totally devoted every moment of his leisure to its advancement and completion.

There have been commentators who have dedicated their whole lives to the study of one author : Homer, Aristotle, and Shakespeare, have had votaries of this kind ; and when admiration and zeal are moderated and tempered by rectitude of judgment, those who, during a long series of years, have chiefly pointed their attention to a particular style of musical composition, must be best acquainted with its beauties, and able to direct others how to execute it with energy and precision.

No musical *amateur* had perhaps ever such experience in these matters, or such frequent opportunities of combining and disposing a numerous band to the best advantage, as Mr. Bates ; who, while he was pursuing the study of literature and science at King's College, Cambridge, had the reputation not only
of

of being the best gentleman-performer on the harpsichord and organ of that time, but had the chief direction of the concerts and choral performances in that university; as he had afterwards at Hinchinbroke, where the earl of Sandwich frequently regaled his neighbours and friends with Oratorios, executed with the utmost precision, by performers of the first class. After the establishment of that most respectable institution, the Concert of Ancient Music, in 1776, of which Mr. Bates digested the plan, he was long the sole conductor of the performances at these meetings, so justly celebrated, not only for accuracy and precision, but for the new effects produced from such old and venerable productions of great masters of harmony, as would otherwise have been buried in oblivion, or swept away from public notice by the rage for novelty, and tide of fashion.

However my mind may be impressed with a reverence for HANDEL, by an early and long acquaintance with his person and works, yet, as it amounts not to bigotry, or the preclusion of all respect or admiration of excellence in others, wherever I can find it, my narrative will be less likely to excite suspicions of improbability, or hyperbole, in such
readers

readers as were not so fortunate as to participate of the surprize and rapture of all that were present at these magnificent performances, and are able to judge of the reality of the sensations described.

As such uncommon attention has lately been bestowed on the *works* of HANDEL, it seems natural to imagine, that the same public which has interested itself so deeply in their performance, will be curious about every thing that concerns the *person* of so renowned a composer. I shall therefore prefix to the following account, a *Sketch of his Life*, drawn from such narrations as have been published in England and Germany, as well as from the recollection of what passed within my own memory and knowledge. And though I reserve the critical examination of the entire works of HANDEL for the last volume of my History, yet, as indiscriminate praise is little better than censure, I shall specify such beauties of composition and effect as I felt most forcibly in attending the performance of each day, and for which, by a careful perusal of the score, I have been since enabled to assign reasons.

After so long a Preface to so short a book, I shall add nothing more, in apology for my
narrative,

narrative, than that I was stimulated to the drawing it up, thus hastily, by the extreme satisfaction I felt in finding that the late **COMMEMORATION** was not only an undertaking of such magnitude as to merit the patronage of an enlightened public; but that the public, by its liberal support and profound attention, manifested itself to be worthy of the undertaking.

SKETCH

S K E T C H
OF THE
L I F E
OF
H A N D E L.

IT is by such minute degrees that men arrive at that point of eminence which interests the public, and awakens general curiosity, that the beginnings of greatness pass unobserved, till they can no longer be distinctly seen through the blaze of meridian brightness. Thus the early events of an illustrious character are generally as obscure and fabulous, as the first years of an ancient and powerful empire. For Biographers, notwithstanding the title they assume, seldom draw from the life; nor, till an illustrious personage has been some time deceased, do enquiry and conjecture begin to busy themselves in tracing incidents, describing situations, and delineating characters. And hence, by procrastination, the whole becomes little better than a mere *fancy-piece*.

If it were possible, however, to know, in detail, the youthful exploits of an Alexander, or a Cæsar; the first poetical effusions of a Homer, or a
B Virgil;

Virgil; the dawnings of reason in a Newton, or a Locke, or the primary fermentations and expansions of genius in a HANDEL, they would afford great gratification to human curiosity, which delights in seeing by what minute gradations, or gigantic strides, men gifted with uncommon powers, begin their journey to the Temple of Fame.

The *Memoirs of the Life of HANDEL*, published in 1760, the year after his decease, though written with zeal and candour, are neither sufficiently ample nor accurate to enable us to ascertain with precision the places of his residence, dates of his productions, or events of his early years, previous to his first arrival in England, in 1710, at the age of Twenty-six.

It is however generally agreed, that the great musician, GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL, was born at Halle, in the Duchy of Magdebourg, and Circle of Lower Saxony, the 24th of February, 1684; that his father was an eminent surgeon and physician of the same place, and upwards of sixty years of age when this son, the issue of a second marriage, was born; and that, in his early childhood, he discovered such a passion for Music as could not be subdued by the commands of his father, who intended him for the profession of the law.

He had made a considerable progress in this art, by stealth, before he was allowed a master; but at seven years old, his father finding it impossible to fix his attention to any thing but Music, for which he seemed to have been endowed by nature with very uncommon propensities and faculties, he placed him under Zachau, organist of the cathedral church of Halle; a man of considerable abilities in his profession, and proud of his pupil. By the time he was nine years old, our young Musician was not only able to officiate on the organ

gan for his master, but began to study composition; and at this early period of his life he is said to have composed a Service, or, as it is called in Germany, a *spiritual Cantata*, every week, for voices and instruments, during three years successively. The late Mr. Weideman was in possession of a set of Sonatas, in three parts, which HANDEL composed when he was only ten years old (*a*).

He seems to have continued to study under his first master Zachau, in his native city, till the year 1698; when, being arrived at the age of fourteen, he was carried to Berlin, where operas were in a very flourishing state, at the court of the Elector of Brandenburg, afterwards King of Prussia, who had then in his service not only many singers of eminence from Italy, but Bononcini and Attilio, to compose. HANDEL is said to have distinguished himself in this city as a wonderful performer, for his early years, and to have given birth to such expectations of his future greatness, that his Electoral Highness offered to take him into his service, and send him to Italy, for the completion of his Musical studies; but his father declining this honour, from a spirit of independence, it was determined that he should return to Halle, where he must have continued a considerable time; though we are told that his father's

(*a*) The earl of Marchmont, in his travels through Germany, when lord Polwarth, picked them up as great curiosities, and gave them to Mr. Weideman, of whom he took lessons on the German flute. A friend, who favoured me with this anecdote, procured a copy of these juvenile productions, which are now in his Majesty's collection, and which Weideman shewed to HANDEL; who seemed to look at them with much pleasure, and laughing, said, "I used to write like the D——l in those days, but chiefly for the hautbois, which was my favourite instrument." This, and the having such an exquisite performer to write for, as San Martini, accounts for the frequent opportunities which HANDEL took of composing for that instrument, in the early part of his life.

death happening soon after his return from Berlin, **HANDEL**, not being able to support the expence of a journey to Italy, whither he was ambitious of going, removed to Hamburgh, in order, by his musical talents, to procure a subsistence : this city, next to Berlin, being then the most renowned for its operas. We lose sight, however, in all the accounts of his life hitherto published, both of our young Musician and his improvements from the time of his quitting Berlin, till his arrival at Hamburgh, a period of five years ; for, according to his rival Mattheson, he did not visit that city till the year 1703, at the age of nineteen.

Yet the celebrated *Telemann*, one of the greatest German Musicians of his time, in a well-written account of his own life and works, drawn up by himself at the request of Mattheson, in the year 1740, furnishes two or three incidents concerning **HANDEL**, which intervened between the time of his quitting Berlin and arrival at Hamburgh, that will help to throw a little light on this dark period of his history.

Telemann, born at Magdeburgh 1681 (*a*), like **HANDEL**, discovered an early passion for Music, and, while he was at school, had, like him, made a great progress in the art, contrary to the inclination of his friends ; but though he played on almost every kind of instrument, and had attempted to compose an opera at twelve years old, yet, in obedience to his mother's positive commands, on whom, as his father was dead, he was solely dependent, at about the age of twenty he solemnly renounced his musical pursuits, though with the greatest reluctance, and set out for Leipzig, in order to study the law in that university. In the way thither, however, he stopt at *Halle*,

(*a*) See *Germ. Tour*, vol. ii. p. 242.

where,

where, says Telemann, “ from my acquaintance
“ with HANDEL, who was *already famous*, I again
“ sucked in so much of the poison of music as
“ nearly overset all my resolutions.”

HANDEL was now about sixteen years of age; and as Telemann, in his account of himself and his studies, soon mentions our juvenile Musician again, I shall proceed a little further in his narrative.

“ However,” continues Telemann, “ after
“ quitting HANDEL, I persevered in the plan prescribed by my mother, and went to Leipzig to
“ pursue my studies; but, unfortunately, was
“ lodged in a house where I perpetually heard
“ Music of all kinds, which, though much worse
“ than my own, again led me into temptation.
“ And a fellow-student finding among my papers
“ a psalm which I had set to music, and which,
“ in sacrificing all my other illicit attempts at composition, had chanced to escape oblivion, he
“ begged it of me, and had it performed at St.
“ Thomas’s church, where it was so much approved, that the burgomaster desired I would
“ compose something of this kind every fortnight;
“ for this I was amply rewarded, and had hopes,
“ likewise, given me, of future advantages of
“ much greater importance. At this time I happened to be reminded of the solemn promise I
“ had made my mother, for whom I had a great
“ reverence, of utterly abandoning all thoughts
“ of Music, by receiving from her a draught for
“ my subsistence: which, however, I returned,
“ and, after mentioning the profitable and promising state of my affairs, earnestly intreated
“ her to relax a little in the rigour of her injunctions, concerning the study of Music. Her
“ blessings on my new labours, followed; and
“ now I was half a musician again.

“ Soon

“ Soon after I was appointed director of the
 “ opera, for which I composed many dramas, not
 “ only for Leipzig, where I established the Col-
 “ lege of Music which still subsists, but for So-
 “ rau, Frankfort, and the court of Weissenfels.
 “ The organ of the new church was then just
 “ built, of which I was appointed organist and di-
 “ rector of the Music. This organ, however, I
 “ only played at the consecration, or opening, and
 “ afterwards resigned it, as a bone of contention
 “ for young musical students to quarrel and
 “ scramble for. At this time the pen of the ex-
 “ cellent Kuhnau served me for a model in fugue
 “ and counterpoint; but in fashioning subjects of
 “ melody, *HANDEL and I were continually exerci-*
 “ *sing our fancy, and reciprocally communicating our*
 “ *thoughts, both by letter and conversation, in the*
 “ *frequent visits we made to each other (a).*”

According to Telemann's dates, all this must
 have happened between the year 1701 and 1703,
 when HANDEL, quitting Halle, arrived at Ham-
 burgh, a place too distant from Leipzig for fre-
 quent visits between these young Musicians to
 have been practicable (b).

It is so difficult to obtain authentic intelligence
 concerning the transactions of individuals, in re-
 mote parts of the world; that, finding how sel-
 dom foreigners speak accurately of what happens
 in our own country, when we speak of theirs, I
 cannot help suspecting myself, as well as others,
 of similar ignorance and inaccuracy.

In the accounts of our Theatres, by Riccoboni;
 of our Poets by Quadrio; and of our Music by
 Mattheson, and others, the information is so scan-

(a) Mattheson's *Chren Psorte*, p. 354, 1740.

(b) Leipzig, which is only 24 English miles from Halle, is 200
 from Hamburgh.

ty and erroneous, that nothing can be more contemptible than the situation into which we are placed in the eyes of our neighbours by these accounts, unless it be the authors themselves, in the opinion of those who are able to detect their mistakes.

The difficulty of eradicating error when it has once gained admission into books, has been long observed; as it is much more easy to take facts for granted and implicitly transcribe, than to examine and confute them.

HANDEL having passed his youth on the continent, and chiefly in Germany, the incidents of that part of his life must have been better known by his cotemporary countrymen than by an inhabitant of England, who, at the distance of fifty years from the arrival of this great Musician among us, depended on tradition for facts.

John Mattheson, an able Musician and voluminous writer on the subject of Music, who resided at Hamburgh during the whole time that HANDEL remained in that city, has many particulars dispersed through his writings, which merit attention. For though he sometimes appears as a friend, companion, and admirer of HANDEL's genius and abilities, and at others assumes the critic, discovering manifest signs of rivalry, envy, and discontent, at his superior success; yet, Mattheson was never so abandoned a writer as to invent or disguise facts, which he knew the whole city of Hamburgh, and even HANDEL himself, who was living till within five years of this author's death, could confute (*a*).

MAT-

(*a*) When I first began this *Sketch*, several of Mattheson's Musical Tracts in my possession having been mislaid, I was unable to consult them; but being since found, respect for my readers, and for truth, have induced me to cancel several leaves that were already printed, and to new write this part of HANDEL's Life.

MATTHESON, born at Hamburgh 1681, had a liberal education, and became a considerable personage in that city; where, in the younger part of his life, he figured in the triple capacity of composer, opera-singer, and harpsichord-player: and afterwards, though he quitted the stage upon being appointed secretary to Sir Cyril Wych, the English resident, yet he continued to study, practise, and write on Musical subjects, till the time of his death.

He discovered as early a propensity to Music as Telemann or HANDEL: having been able at nine years old to sing his own compositions to the organ, in one of the Hamburgh churches; and, at eighteen, he set an opera called the *Pleiades*, for the theatre in that city, in which he sung the principal part himself.

Indeed, Mattheson's early connexion and intercourse there with HANDEL, before his name as a great Musician had penetrated into other parts of Europe, were such, that it is hopeless now to seek for better information than his writings furnish, concerning so interesting a period.

Mattheson was a vain and pompous man, whose first wish in all his writings was to impress the reader with due reverence for his own abilities and importance (*a*). It was his boast before his death, in 1764, at the age of eighty-three, ' that he had

Life, in order not only to correct the mistakes into which I had been led by trusting to his former English Biographer, but to insert from German writers such other incidents as concern HANDEL's younger years, of which, as we know but little in England, the admirers of this venerable master will be more particularly curious.

(*a*) In this he seems to have succeeded with his countrymen, as several theoretical books are dedicated to him: and Mr. Marburg's *Treatise on Thorough-Bass*, among the rest. **Handuch bey dem General-basse und der Composition.** Berlin, 1762.

' printed

‘ printed as many books, on the subject of Music, as he had lived years ; and that he should leave to his executors an equal number, in manuscript for the use of posterity.

‘ In 1761, he published a Translation of the Life of HANDEL, from the English; with additions and remarks, which are neither very candid nor liberal. But how should the author of that book expect quarter from him, in which it is asserted, that “ Mattheson was no great singer, and only employed occasionally.” In refutation of which he assures us, “ that he constantly sung the principal parts in the Hamburgh operas, during fifteen years, and with such success, that he could command the passions of his audience, by exciting in them, at his pleasure, joy, grief, hope, and fear.” And who shall venture to doubt of his having possessed these powers, when their effects are thus attested by himself (a)?”

In a work of Musical biography and criticism, by Mattheson, called *Grundlage einer Ehren-Pforte, Foundation of a triumphal Arch*, in honour of Music and Musicians, published at Hamburgh, 1740, in which there is a long and inflated account of himself and his works, which occupies thirty pages, we have, as well as in his annotations on the English Life, a more ample and satisfactory account of HANDEL’s juvenile compositions and adventures, than I have been able to find elsewhere.

After telling us that he arrived at Hamburgh in the summer of 1703, rich in genius and good disposition : “ Here,” says Mattheson, “ almost his first acquaintance was myself; as I met with him at the organ of St. Mary Magdalen’s church, July the 30th, whence I conducted him to my

(a) *Journal of a Musical Tour through Germany*, &c. vol. II.

“ father’s

“ father’s house, where he was treated with all possible kindness as well as hospitality; and I afterwards not only attended him to organs, choirs, operas, and concerts, but recommended him to several scholars, particularly to one in a certain house, where every body was much devoted to Music (a).

“ At first he played a *ripieno* violin in the opera orchestra, and behaved as if he could not count five; being naturally inclined to dry humour (b).

“ At this time he composed extreme long *Airs* and *Cantatas* without end; of which, though the harmony was excellent, yet true taste was wanting; which, however, he very soon acquired by his attendance at the opera.”

As these young Musicians lived much together in great intimacy, they had frequent amicable contests and trials of skill with each other; in which it appearing that they excelled on different instruments, HANDEL on the organ, and Mattheson on the harpsichord, they mutually agreed not to invade each other’s province, and faithfully observed this compact for five or six years.

Mattheson tells us, that in the year 1704, the opera-house at Hamburgh happening to be shut, leaving HANDEL behind him, he travelled to Holland, played on the famous organs, and heard the great performers in that country; made concerts at Amsterdam, and might have been elected organist

(a) This appears, in another of Mattheson’s works, to have been the house of the English resident, where it seems as if he had supplanted HANDEL before his departure from Hamburgh, by being appointed, not only *Secrétaire de Legation*, and Governor to the Resident’s son, but his Music-master.

(b) “ I know,” says Mattheson, “ if he happens to read this, he will laugh in his heart, for he never laughed outwardly; particularly if he remembers the poulterer who travelled with us; the pastry-cook’s son who blew the bellows for us at St. Mary’s; our parties on the water together; and a hundred other circumstances, still fresh in my mind.”

of Haerlem: having had an offer of that place, with a salary of fifteen hundred Dutch goldens, equal to near a hundred and fifty pounds sterling a year. He had then thoughts of going to England, but was prevented from executing that design, or of accepting the place of organist at Haerlem, by the pressing intreaties he received from the managers of the opera, his family, friends, and confessor; but chiefly by a most kind and obliging letter which was written to him by HANDEL, from Hamburg. This letter in order to shew the kind of intimacy which then subsisted between them, Mattheson has inserted in his *Triumphal Arch*. It is dated March 18, and was written before clashing interests and rival claims had occasioned any interruption to their friendship; among other expressions of civility from HANDEL, he gives the following.

“ I often wish to enjoy your very agreeable conversation, which I hope will soon happen, as the time approaches, when, without your presence, nothing can be done at the opera. I most humbly intreat you to inform me of your departure from Amsterdam, that I may have an opportunity of shewing my regard, by giving you the meeting.”

HANDEL, at this time, must have been composing his first Opera, in which, depending upon Mattheson to perform the principal man's part, he had, probably, set the songs to his style of singing and compass of voice; but vanity never suffered Mattheson to ascribe HANDEL's attentions to any thing but pure love and kindness.

In his remarks on the English Life of HANDEL, he is particularly severe on that part of it which contains an account of the quarrel which happened between him and that composer, soon after the letter was written: accusing the Biographer not only of violating geography, chronology, and history,

tory, but of a wilful misrepresentation of facts, in relating the circumstances of this breach between them.

Mattheson, who, with all his self-complaisance and pedantry, is generally allowed to have been diligent in finding, and exact in stating facts, after telling us that HANDEL, when he first came to Hamburgh, notwithstanding the exalted station at which he soon arrived, had no better part assigned him in the opera, than the *Second ripieno Violin (a)*; informs us, that “though he then pretended to
“ know nothing, yet he used to be very arch, for
“ he had always a dry way of making the gravest
“ people laugh, without laughing himself. But
“ his superior abilities were soon discovered, when,
“ upon occasion of the harpsichord player at the
“ opera being absent, he was first persuaded to
“ take his place; for he then shewed himself to be
“ a great master, to the astonishment of every one,
“ except myself, who had frequently heard him
“ before, upon keyed-instruments.”

According to Mattheson's own confession, he acquired from HANDEL, by frequently meeting him at his father's house, and practising with him, a knowledge of modulation, and method of combining sounds, which he could have learned of no one else.

Upon a vacancy in an organist's place at Lubec, they travelled thither together, and in the *wagen* composed several double *fugues, da mente*, says Mattheson, not *da penna*. Buxtehude was then at Lubec, and an admirable organ-player; however, HANDEL's powers on that instrument astonished even those who were accustomed to hear that great performer. HANDEL and Mattheson were pre-

(a) “ To how minute an origin we owe

“ Young Ammon, Cæsar, and the great Nassau !”

vented from becoming candidates for the place of organist at Lubec, by a condition that was annexed to the obtaining that office; which was no other than to take with it, a wife, whom their constituents were to nominate; but thinking this too great an honour, they precipitately retreated to Hamburgh.

About this time an opera, called *Cleopatra*, composed by Mattheson, was performed on that stage, in which he acted the part of Anthony himself, and HANDEL played the harpsichord; but Mattheson being accustomed, upon the death of Anthony, which happens early in the piece, to take the harpsichord, in the character of composer, HANDEL refused to indulge his vanity, by relinquishing to him this post; which occasioned so violent a quarrel between them, that at going out of the house, Mattheson gave him a slap on the face; upon which, both immediately drew their swords, and a duel ensued in the Market-place, before the door of the Opera-house: luckily, the sword of Mattheson was broke against a metal button upon HANDEL's coat, which put an end to the combat, and they were soon after reconciled.

Such is the account, which, long before the death of HANDEL, Mattheson himself published, concerning the difference that happened between them, during his residence at Hamburgh.

The English biographer is very roughly handled by Mattheson for saying, that this duel had "more the appearance of *assassination* than of a *rencounter*," and accuses him of constantly and wilfully diminishing the age of HANDEL, in order to represent him not only as a prodigy in Music, but a youth of too tender years to be possessed of courage, reason, or skill, sufficient to defend himself; but if he had been capable of making a defence, says the author of his Life, "he could not be pre-
pared

"pared for it." In answer to all this, Mattheson observes, that "HANDEL, at the time of the quarrel, "was twenty years of age; tall, strong, broad-shouldered, and muscular; consequently, well able to defend himself:" and adds, that "*a dry slap on the face was no assassination, but rather a friendly hint, to put him on his guard.*"

This rencounter happened the 5th of December, 1704; and, as a proof of a speedy reconciliation, Mattheson tells us, that on the 30th of the same month, he accompanied the young composer to the rehearsal of his first opera of *Almira*, at the theatre, and performed in it the principal part; and that, afterwards, they became greater friends than ever. This opera, though rehearsed at the end of 1704, was not publicly performed till the beginning of 1705, when it was greatly approved (*a*).

On the 25th of February of the same year, he produced his second opera, called *Nero*, which had likewise a very favourable reception (*b*). It was at the end of the run of these two dramas that Mattheson, who performed the principal man's part in both, quitted the stage, on his being appointed secretary to the British resident at Hamburgh; an office in which he continued to the time of his death, at the distance of near sixty years from his first appointment (*c*).

That

(*a*) The German title of this opera is: **Der in Kronen erlangte Glückwechsel, oder Almira, Königin von Castilien**; that is, *The Vicissitudes of Royalty*, or *ALMIRA Queen of Castile*. There was an Epilogue to this drama, called *The Genius of Europe*, set by Keyser.

(*b*) This opera was styled in German: **Nero, oder die durch Blut und Mord erlangte Liebe**; *NERO*, or, *Love obtained by Blood and Murder*.

(*c*) Mattheson's first opera, called the *Pleiades*, was performed at Hamburgh, 1699. *Porfenna*, the second, 1702. *Victor, Duke*

of

That Mattheson had more knowledge than taste, no other proof need be given than the following conceit, which was related to me at Hamburg. Late in life, in setting, as part of his own funeral anthem, the third verse of the fourth chapter of Revelations : “ And there was a *rain-bow* round “ about the throne,” he contrived in a very full score, to make every part form an *arch*, by a gradual ascent and descent of the notes on paper, in plain counter-point; which appearance to the *eyes* of the performers, he probably thought would convey the idea of a *rain-bow* to the *ears* of the congregation !

All the Music that I have ever seen by Mattheson is steril of ideas and uninteresting. It has been said, that he was a great performer on the harpsichord, and that HANDEL frequently amused himself with playing his pieces ; in doing which, if ever he regarded Mattheson as a formidable rival, his triumph must have been very complete in comparing them with his own, or with the inherent powers which he must have felt of producing better whenever he pleased. I am in possession of a set of Twelve Lessons by Mattheson, engraved on copper, by Fletcher, in tall folio of eighteen staved paper, London 1714 ; who, in a Preface speaks of them as “ Pieces which claim precedence to all “ others of this nature ; as being composed by “ one of the greatest masters of the age, in a taste “ altogether pleasing and sublime.” They consist of *Overtures, Preludes, Fugues, Allemandes, Courantes, Giges and Aires* ; but notwithstanding the Editor’s Eloge, like all the harpsichord music I ever saw, anterior to HANDEL’s admirable *Suites*

of Normandy, the third, of which Schieferdecker composed the first act, Mattheson the second, and Bronner the third, was performed the same year. *Cleopatra*, the fourth, which occasioned the quarrel between Mattheson and HANDEL, 1704.

de Pieces, first Set, 1720; though in good harmony, it impresses the mind with no better idea of accent, grace, or passion, than the gingling of triangles, or bells of a pack-horse; and is truly such as degrades the instrument to the level of *sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal*.

From 1705 to 1708, when HANDEL set two other operas, *Florinda* and *Dafne*, he furnished nothing for the stage; though he had many scholars, composed harpsichord-pieces, single songs, and cantatas, innumerable (*a*).

During his residence at Hamburgh, Mattheson allows, that HANDEL improved his own style greatly, by his constant attendance at the opera; and says, that he was even more powerful upon the organ, in extempore fugues and counterpoint, than the famous Kuhnau of Leipzig, who was at this time regarded as a prodigy.

HANDEL having acquired by his operas at Hamburgh a sum sufficient to enable him to visit Italy, set out for that seat of the Muses, a journey after which every man of genius so ardently pants. He staid some time at Florence, where he composed the opera of *Rodrigo*. From this city he went to Venice, where, in 1709, he produced his *Agrippina*, which is said by his biographer to have been received with acclamation, and to have run thirty

(*a*) I procured at Hamburgh, in 1773, a manuscript collection of cantatas, by the principal composers of the early part of the present century; among which are two by HANDEL, which I never saw elsewhere; and these, it is most probable, were produced in that city, during his residence there, previous to his arrival in England, or journey into Italy. One of these cantatas has a spirited accompaniment for a harpsichord, *obligato*. At the end is a short air, which seems to contain the germ, or subject, of a favourite harpsichord lesson, printed in the second volume of his *Pieces de Clavecin*, p. 5, the identical movement with which he ended the last concerto which he ever played in public. This cantata is the more likely to have been composed early in his youth, as there are some little liberties, and negligences in the composition, which have never appeared in his later productions.

nights. Here he met with Domenico Scarlatti, Gasparini, and Lotti.

The next place he visited, was Rome, where he had an opportunity of hearing compositions and performers of the first class. Here the elder Scarlatti and Gasparini had brought vocal music to great perfection, and Corelli, instrumental. At cardinal Ottoboni's, by whom HANDEL was greatly caressed and patronized, he had frequently the advantage of hearing the natural and elegant Corelli perform his own works. Here our young composer produced a serenata: *Il Trionfo del Tempo* (a); after which he proceeded to Naples, where he set *Acis and Galatea*, in Italian, to music totally different from the little English drama, written by Gay, which he set in 1721, for the Duke of Chandos.

When he returned to Germany, on quitting Italy, at the latter end of 1709, or the beginning of 1710, the first place at which he stopt was Hanover; where he found a munificent patron in the Elector, who afterwards, on the death of queen Anne, ascended the English throne, by the name of George the First. This prince had in his service, as maestro di capella, the elegant and learned composer Stefani, whom HANDEL had met before at Venice, and who now resigned his office of maestro di capella to the Elector, in his favour. This venerable composer served him as a model for the style of chamber duets, as well as facilitated his introduction to the smiles of his patron, the Elector, who settled on him a pension of 1500 crowns,

(a) The original score of this work is in his Majesty's collection. In 1770, I purchased at Rome, among other manuscript compositions by old masters, six cantatas, *a voce Solo*, del Giorgio Federigo HENDEL, detto il Sassone, which were, probably, produced in this city during his residence there, about the year 1709: by the yellow colour of the ink, they seem to have been long transcribed. Some of them I have never seen in any other collection.

upon condition that he would return to his court, when he had completed his travels. HANDEL, acceding to this proposition, went to Dusseldorp, where he had a flattering reception from the Elector Palatine, who, likewise, wished to retain him in his service. But besides the engagement into which he had entered with the Elector of Hanover, he was impatient to visit England, where a passion for dramatic Music had already manifested itself in several aukward attempts at operas, and to which place he had received invitations from several of the nobility, whom he had seen in Italy and Hanover.

It was at the latter end of the year 1710, that he arrived in England; his reception was as flattering to himself as honourable to the nation, at this time no less successful in war, than in the cultivation of the arts of peace. To the wit, poetry, literature, and science, which marked this period of our history, HANDEL added all the blandishments of a nervous and learned Music, which he first brought hither, planted, and lived to see grow to a very flourishing state.

Of the superior talents and abilities, which HANDEL now possessed, and of the success with which he had exercised both on the Continent, Fame, who in the character of *avant-coureur*, had waisted intelligence to this country, procured him an easy and favourable reception at court, and in many of the principal families of the kingdom. Aaron Hill, at this time manager of the opera, availing himself of his arrival, hastily sketched out the plan of a Musical Drama, from Taffo's Jerusalem, and gave it to the Italian poet, Rossi, to work into an opera, by the name of RINALDO. This Drama was first performed in March, 1711, and HANDEL is said, in the Preface, to have set it to Music in a fortnight.

Mr.

Mr. Addison, in the *Spectator*, N^o 5, with his usual pleasantries, but total insensibility to superior musical excellence, mentions this circumstance among other frivolous incidents, which he means to ridicule. Had this writer and critic, so admirable in other respects, been possessed of judgment and feeling in Music equal to his learning and taste in literature, he would have discovered that to compose an entire opera in less time than a copyist could transcribe it, and in a more masterly and original style than had ever before been heard in this, or perhaps, any country, was not a fair subject for sarcasm. All Music seems alike to Addison, except French Recitative, for which he seems to have a particular predilection (a).

The opera of *Rinaldo*, in which the celebrated Nicolini and Valentini, the first Italian singers that appeared on our stage, performed; was the delight of the nation during many years: as it was revived 1712, 1717, and 1731.

After remaining about a year in this country, and establishing a great reputation on the solid basis of the most exalted and indisputable merit, both as a composer and performer, he returned to Hanover, on a promise made to his most powerful English friends to revisit this kingdom again, as soon as he could obtain permission of his Electoral Highness and patron. About the end of the year 1712, this permission was granted for a limited time. And we find his *Pastor Fido*, and *Theseus*, in the list of Italian operas, brought on the English stage, this and the following year. And in 1715, *Amadige*, or *Amadis of Gaul*. In all these operas Nicolini, Valentini, Margarita, and Mrs. Anastasia Robinson, were the principal singers.

(a) *Spectator*, N^o 29.

Not long after his second arrival in London, the peace of Utrecht having been brought to a conclusion, HANDEL was preferred to all others, seemingly without a murmur from native Musicians, to compose the Hymn of Gratitude and Triumph on the occasion. Envy, though outrageous and noisy at the success of comparative abilities, is struck dumb and blind by excess of superiority. The grand *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, which he set on this occasion, were composed with such force, regularity, and instrumental effects, as the English had never heard before. Purcell's *Te Deum*, in design, and expression of the words, is, perhaps, superior to all others; but in grandeur and richness of accompaniment, nothing but national partiality can deny HANDEL the preference. The queen settled on him for life a pension of Two Hundred pounds per annum. And all who had heard Rinaldo, wished him again employed for the opera; so that the multiplicity of business, and the many protectors and friends he met with in England, a little impaired the memory of our great composer with respect to continental connections; and he seemed to think of nothing less than returning to Hanover till after the death of queen Anne, in 1714, when his majesty, George the First, arriving in England, saved him the trouble of a German tour.

HANDEL, conscious of his deficiency in respect and gratitude, to a prince who honoured him with such flattering marks of approbation and bounty, durst not approach the court, till by the ingenuity and friendly interposition of baron Kilmansegge, he was restored to favour in the following manner. The King, soon after his arrival in these kingdoms, having been prevailed on to form a party on the water, the design was communicated to HANDEL, who was advised to com-
pose

pose some pieces expressly for the occasion; the performance of which he secretly conducted in a boat, that accompanied the royal barge. Upon hearing these compositions, which have been since so well known, and so justly celebrated under the title of the *Water-Music*, his Majesty, equally surprised and pleased by their excellence, eagerly enquired who was the author of them; when the baron acquainted the king that they were the productions of a faithful servant of his majesty, who, conscious of the cause of displeasure which he had given to so gracious a protector, durst not presume to approach his royal presence, till he had assurances that by every possible demonstration of duty and gratitude in future, he might hope to obtain a pardon. This intercession having been graciously accepted, HANDEL was restored to favour, and his compositions honoured with the most flattering marks of royal approbation. And as a ratification of the delinquent's peace, thus easily obtained, his majesty was pleased to add a pension of Two Hundred pounds a-year to that which had been previously conferred on him by queen Anne; and not many years after, when he was employed to teach the young princesses, another pension of the same value was added to the former grants, by her majesty queen Caroline.

From the year 1715 to 1720, I find, in the records of the Musical Drama, no new opera that was set by HANDEL. The first three years of this period were chiefly spent at the earl of Burlington's, a nobleman, whose taste and judgment in the fine arts were as exquisite as his patronage to their votaries was liberal. And during the other two years, HANDEL seems to have been employed at Cannons, as maestro di capella to the duke of Chandos; who, among other splendid and princely kinds of magnificence, established a chapel, in which

which the cathedral service was daily performed by a choir of voices and instruments, superior, at that time, perhaps, in number and excellence, to that of any sovereign prince in Europe. Here HANDEL produced, besides his anthems, the chief part of his hautbois concertos, sonatas, lessons, and organ fugues; which are all so masterly, spirited, and exquisite in their several kinds, that if he had never composed an opera, oratorio, Te Deum, duet, cantata, or any other species of vocal music, his name would have been had in reverence by true Musicians, as long as the characters in which they are written, should continue to be legible.

We come now to the busiest and most glorious period of HANDEL's life; who, arrived at that stage of existence which Dante calls

Il mezzo del cammin di nostra vita :

when the human frame and faculties have acquired their utmost strength and vigour; endowed with great natural powers, highly improved by cultivation; with a hand which no difficulties could embarrass; a genius for composition unbounded; at the head of a profession which facilitates access to the great, and, with extraordinary abilities, ensures their patronage; high in the favour of the sovereign, nobles, and public, of a great and powerful nation, at a period of its greatest happiness and tranquillity; when it was not only blest with leisure and zeal to cultivate the arts of peace, but with power, liberally to reward those whose successful efforts had carried them beyond the bounds of mediocrity.

Such were HANDEL's circumstances and situation, when a plan was formed, by the English nobility and gentry, for establishing a fund for the support

support of Italian operas, of which he was to be the composer and director, and, as his Majesty king George the First was pleased to subscribe one thousand pounds towards the execution of this design, and to let his name appear at the head of the subscription, amounting to fifty thousand pounds, this society was called the *Royal Academy*.

When HANDEL quitted his employment at Cannons, he was commissioned by this academy to go to Dresden, in order to engage singers. Here he found Senesino, Durastanti, Berenstadt, and Boschi, whom he brought over to England,

Though the principal intention, in forming the academy, was to appoint HANDEL the composer and director of the band; the public was not, as yet, unanimous in supporting this measure. Bononcini and Attilio had been invited over by the former managers of the opera; and as they were composers of acknowledged merit, there was an unwillingness in their admirers and friends to consent to their dismissal. And it was now that those musical feuds began, of which Swift has perpetuated the memory, by an epigram, which throws contempt upon an art, and upon artists, whose merit he never felt or understood, though he could see the ridicule of their situation. But the satirist who discovers no difference between a Dryden and a Bell-man, or a Raphael and a House-painter, is full as well qualified to talk about poetry and painting, as he about music, who neither sees nor hears the difference between the productions of a HANDEL or a Bononcini, and those of the most despicable fiddler.

No art, science, or even religious or moral truth, can parry the assaults of ridicule, when wit and humour guide the thrust; though, luckily, the wounds inflicted are slight, and cure themselves.

For

For neither lovers of art, nor of religion and virtue, can be long diverted from their pursuits, by a gibe or *bon mot*. A great nation, in which there are so many opulent individuals, wants innocent amusements for their leisure hours, when quitting the chace and rural sports they are assembled together in the capital; and in the best and most polished ages of the world, the cultivation and patronage of Music have employed the talents and munificence of its most distinguished inhabitants.

Musical dramas or operas, which during the last century travelled from Italy to France, and from France to England, were never attempted in the Italian language till the reign of queen Anne, when the first essays were made by performers, partly natives, and partly Italians, who severally used their own dialect; the absurdity of which Addison has ridiculed with great humour and pleasantry in the *Spectator*, No. 18 (a). But as the love for operas was then, and has been ever since, most powerfully excited in such of our nobility and gentry as have visited Italy in their youth, it is natural that they should at all times wish to have these exhibitions as near the models with which they had been acquainted on the continent, as possible. And of such we may suppose the Royal Academy was composed: as the duke of Newcastle, was governor; lord Bingley, deputy-governor; and the dukes of Portland and Queensbury, earls of Burlington, Stair, and Waldegrave, lords Chetwynd and Stanhope, James Bruce, esq. colonel Blathwait, Thomas Coke, of Norfolk, esq. Conyers D'Arcy, esq. brigadier-general Dormer, Bryan Fairfax, esq. colonel O'Hara,

(a) The Germans, according to Riccoboni, at the beginning of this century, had operas performed in the same manner; the Recitative being pronounced in German, and the Airs in Italian.

ra, George Harrifon, efq. brigadier-general Hunter, William Pulteney, efq. fir John Vanbrugh, major-general Wade, and Francis Whitworth, efq. directors.

These great and eminent perfonages could not however, get the whole management of the operas into their own hands, all at once: oppositions are no lefs frequent, than furious, in popular governments; and, on this occafion, political animofities were blended with Mufical faction. All the friends of Bononcini and Attilio were not, perhaps, entirely guided by the love of Mufic, and fense of their fuperiority; the love of power, and hatred of the abettors of HANDEL, for party confiderations, furnifhed fuel to their zeal; and HANDEL, ere they gave way, was forced to mount the ftage, and fight his own battle. For all that his friends could obtain of thofe that were in poffeffion of the Theatre in the Haymarket, at his return from Dresden, with auxiliaries, was permiffion to have his opera of *Radamiftus* performed there in 1720 (a). On this occafion, the expectations which the public had formed of the abilities of HANDEL, from his great reputation, and the fpecimens he had already given, may be eftimated by the crouds which affembled at the Opera-Houfe doors, when there was no longer any room for their admiffion. And the applaufe of thofe who were fo fortunate as to obtain places, evinced the full gratification of the delight they expected to receive. This opera, however, with all its merit and fuccefs, did not obtain for HANDEL a victory fufficiently decifive, to oblige the enemy to quit the field.

(a) This opera, under the title of *Zenobia*, was tranflated into German, by Mattheson, and performed to HANDEL's Mufic, in Hamburgh, 1721.

After

After this, as the last experiment, it was agreed by the friends of the three several rivals, that each of them should compose an act of the same opera, with an overture to each act. The drama fixed upon was *Mutius Scævola*, of which Bononcini set the first act, Attilio the second, and HANDEL the third; and this fiery trial determined the point of precedence between him and his competitors: the act in *Mutius Scævola*, which HANDEL composed, being pronounced superior to both the others, and Bononcini's the next in merit.

It was the more honourable to our great Musician to have vanquished such a champion as Bononcini, as he was a man of great abilities, and very high in reputation all over Europe. Few, indeed, are able, when the difference is doubtful, to discriminate and set a just value on the nicer shades of excellence: a grain of partiality or prejudice can then turn the scale of either side, when in the hands of the best judges; but how shall ignorance dare to determine, what learning and experience can scarce discern?

The truth is, that Bononcini's peculiar merit in setting Italian words seems to have been out of the reach of an English audience, and that Italians were alone competent to judge of it; who say, that his knowledge in singing and in their language was such as rendered his *cantilena*, or melody, more natural and elegant to vocal performers, and his *recitatives* more passionate, and expressive of nicer sensations and inflexions, to every hearer accustomed to the tones of Italian speech, than those of his rival; but in majesty, grandeur, force, fire, and invention, which are not local beauties, but striking and intelligible in all countries, HANDEL was infinitely his superior.

From this memorable victory, in 1721, the Royal Academy seems to have been firmly established

blished during the space of eight or nine years, under the management of HANDEL's most powerful friends and greatest admirers; who, in appointing him the principal composer, gave him absolute dominion over the performers (a).

There were, however, from time to time, several operas of Bononcini and Attilio exhibited during this period, on the same stage, and by the same performers, as those of HANDEL; perhaps to conciliate parties: the lovers of Music are sometimes froward, capricious, and unreasonable, as well as the professors. This was never more conspicuous to by-standers, than in the violence of party for the two singers, Cuzzoni and Faustina, in the year 1727; at which time, though both were excellent performers, in different styles, yet so unwilling was the English public to be pleased with both, that when the admirers of one of these firens began to applaud, those of the other were sure to hiss. It seems as impossible for two singers of equal merit to tread the same stage, *a parte eguale*, as for two people to ride on the same horse, without one being behind.

“ If the frequenters of Musical Dramas had not
 “ then been enemies to their own pleasure, the
 “ merit of these singers consisted of excellencies
 “ so different and distinct, that they might have
 “ applauded each by turns, and, from their several
 “ perfections, by turns, have received equal
 “ delight,

“ Unluckily for moderate people, who seek
 “ pleasure from talents wherever they can be
 “ found, the violence of these feuds has cured all

(a) During this prosperous period, after *Radamisto*, and *Muzio Scevola*, HANDEL produced his operas of *Ottone*, *Floridante*, *Flavio*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Tamerlano*, *Rodelinda*, *Scipione*, *Alessandro*, *Ricardo primo*, *Ammeto*, *Siroe*, *Tolomeo*, *Lotario*, *Partenope*, and *Pero*.

“ succeeding

“ succeeding managers of the extravagance of
 “ engaging two fingers of the same sex, at a time,
 “ of disputable abilities (a).”

Dr. Arbuthnot, on occasion of the contested rights of *supremacy* between these theatrical principals and their adherents, published, 1728, a *Manifesto*, intitled, “ The Devil to pay at St. James’s: or a full and true account of a most horrid and bloody battle between *Madame Faustina* and *Madame Cuzzoni*. Also a hot skirmish between *Signor Boschi* and *Signor Palmerini*. Moreover, how *Senesino* has taken snuff, is going to leave the opera, and sing psalms at *Henley’s Oratory* (b).”

A few years after, a quarrel happened between HANDEL and Senesino, which broke up the Academy, and was not only injurious to the fortune of our great Composer, but the cause of infinite trouble and vexation to him, during the rest of his life.

Dr. Arbuthnot, who was always a very zealous and active friend to HANDEL, entered the lists, as his champion, whenever an opportunity offered of defending his cause. And, as *ridicule* supplied him with all kinds of ammunition, and the *pen* was his most irresistible weapon, he had recourse to these in the contention with Senesino, who had almost all the great barons of the realm for his allies. And in this second *puny* war, after mutual complaints of treaties violated, rights infringed, and hostilities committed, he published another *Manifesto*, which had for title, “ Harmony in an Uproar: a Letter to GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL, esq. master of the Opera-house in the

(a) *Journal of a Musical Tour through Germany*, &c. vol. ii. p. 189.

(b) *Arbuthnot’s Miscellanies*, vol. i. from p. 213, to 216.

“ Hay-

“ Hay-market, from *Hurlothrumbo Johnson*, esq.
“ composer extraordinary to all the theatres in
“ Great Britain, excepting that at the Haymar-
“ ket. In which the rights and merits of both
“ Operas are properly considered.”

A court is instituted in this pamphlet for the trial of HANDEL, who is ordered to hold up his hand, and to answer to the following several high crimes and misdemeanors committed upon the wills and understandings of the people of this country.

Imprimis, he is charged with having bewitched us for the space of twenty years past.

Secondly, with most insolently daring to give us good Music and sound Harmony, when we wanted bad.

Thirdly, with most feloniously and arrogantly assuming to himself an uncontrouled power of pleasing us whether we would or no; and with often being so bold as to charm us, when we were positively resolved to be out of humour.

Dr. *Pushpin* and Dr. *Blue* (*Pepusch* and *Green*) accuse him of not being a graduate in either of the universities; and the former of not having read Euclid, or studied the Greek modes. Others of having composed such Music as not only puzzled our parish clerks and threw out every congregation, but such as never man produced before. Then, as an instance of his having practised force-ry in this kingdom on his majesty's liege subjects, and of bewitching every sense we have, it is asserted that there was not a letter in any one of his public bills but had magic in it; and that if at any time a squeak of one of his fiddles, or a tooting of one of his pipes was to be heard, away danced the whole town, helter skelter, crouding, pressing, and shoving; and happy were they who could be squeezed to death. At length the court concludes,

concludes, that “ as *one* Opera is such an enormous source of expence, luxury, idleness, sloth, and effeminacy, there could be no way so proper to redress these grievances, as the setting up *another*.”

The only parts of this ironical letter which seem to be serious are printed in Italics, and contain *HANDEL*'s own defence : who, in answer to the crimes with which he was charged by his opponents is made to say, “ that he was no way to blame in the whole affair ; but that when *Sene- sino* had declared he would leave England, he thought himself obliged in honour to proceed with his contract, and provide for himself elsewhere ; that as for *Cuzzoni*, he had no thought of her, no hopes of her, nor no want of her, *Strada* being in all respects infinitely superior, in any excellency required for the stage ; as for fingers in the under parts, he had provided the best set we ever had yet ; though basely deserted by *Montagnana*, after having signed a formal contract to serve him the whole of this season ; which he might still force him to do were he not more afraid of Westminster-hall than ten thousand D—rs, or ten thousand D—ls. That as he was obliged to carry on operas this winter, he imagined he might be at liberty to proceed in the business in that manner which would prove most to the satisfaction of the unprejudiced part of the nobility and gentry, and his own interest and honour.”—He afterwards adds, “ that it was impossible for him to comply with the unreasonable and savage proposals made to him ; by which he was to give up all contracts, promises, nay risque his fortune, to gratify fantastical whims and unjust piques.” And continues to plead his own cause, by saying, “ that if he was misled, or had judged wrong at
any

“ any time in raising the price of his tickets, he
 “ was sufficiently punished, without carrying re-
 “ sentment on that account to such a length (a).
 “ But in whatever light the entertainment was
 “ considered, it certainly better merited such an
 “ extravagant price, than any other ever yet ex-
 “ hibited in this nation.”

In another part of this pamphlet, a partizan for HANDEL, captivated by the vocal powers of *Ca-restini*, whom he had brought over in order to supersede *Senesino*, accosts *Hurlothrumbo* in the following manner : “ So, Sir, I hear you are a great
 “ stickler for the Opera at Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields ;
 “ a pretty set of fingers, truly ! and for compo-
 “ sers, you out-do the world !—Don’t you think,
 “ says he, at this time of life, *Senesino* could twang
 “ a prayer finely through the nose in petticoats at
 “ a conventicle ? Hah ! (b)—Or, what think you,
 “ says he, of *Signora Celesti* snuffling a hymn there
 “ in concert ; or, *Madame Bertolli*, with her un-

(a) Besides the offence given to the subscribers of the Royal Academy, by refusing to compose for, or even employ *Senesino*, the great favourite of the nation, HANDEL disoblighed them extremely, not only by raising the price of admission to a Guinea, but by refusing to let them occupy their particular boxes in the Haymarket theatre, when he performed there his oratorio of *Esther*, in the summer 1732.

(b) Quadrio has placed *Senesino* in the list of singers who began to distinguish themselves between the year 1690 and 1700 ; but in examining a collection of more than fifty volumes of Italian operas, or musical dramas, his name appears in no *Dramatis Personæ*, or even Musical tract, that I have seen, till the year 1719, when he sung the first man’s part in an opera composed by Lotti, for the court of the king of Poland, at Dresden, where he was engaged by HANDEL for the Royal Academy in England. Strange and sudden vicissitudes in human affairs have often excited surprise and exclamation, but in none, I believe, more frequently than in such as concern Music. Who could have imagined that it would ever become necessary for HANDEL himself, or his friends, to depreciate the talents and *write down* SENESINO, whose voice, action, taste, and abilities, had hitherto been the props of his fame and fortune ! But history shews that many a sovereign has been greatly incommoded by the desertion and resentment of a discarded general.

“ meaning

“ meaning voice, with as little force in it as a pair
 “ of Smith’s bellows with twenty holes in the
 “ sides: Your base, indeed (*a*), makes a humming,
 “ noise, and could roar to some purpose, if he had
 “ songs proper for him: as for your *Signora Fa-*
 “ *gotto* (*b*), she, indeed, may, with her master,
 “ be sent home to school again; and by the time
 “ she is fourscore, she’ll prove a vast addition to
 “ a bonfire; or make a fine *Duenna* in a Spanish
 “ opera.”

“ Your composers too have behaved notably tru-
 “ ly, your *Porpoise* (*c*), says he, may roul and rum-
 “ ble about as he pleases, and prelude to a storm of
 “ his own raising; but you should let him know,
 “ that a bad imitation always wants the air and
 “ spirit of an original, and that there is a wide
 “ difference betwixt full harmony, and making a
 “ noise.—I know your expectations are very high
 “ from the performance of the king of *Arra-*
 “ *gon* (*d*); but that *Trolly Colly* composer, a stupid
 “ *cantata-thrummer*, must make a mighty poor
 “ figure in an opera; though he was so nice last
 “ winter, that he would not allow that *HANDEL*
 “ could compose, or *Senesino* sing: what art he
 “ has used, to produce him now as the first voice
 “ in Europe, I cannot imagine; but you must not
 “ depend upon his majesty too far; for to my know-
 “ ledge, he has been engaged by a formal depu-
 “ tation from the general assembly of North Bri-
 “ tain, to new-set their Scotch Psalms, and to be
 “ clerk to the high-kirk in Edinburgh, with a
 “ salary of one hundred pounds Scots, per an-
 “ num.”

(*a*) *Montagnana*.

(*b*) *Segatti*, the first woman in the opera established by the nobility in Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields, till the second arrival of *Cuzzoni*.

(*c*) *Porpora*.

(*d*) *Arrigoni*, the Lutenist.

This Letter, dated February 12, 1733, was published in a shilling pamphlet, and occupies twenty-four pages in the second volume of Arbuthnot's Miscellanies. Some of the irony and humour is well pointed, and much of the musical politics of the day may be gathered from its perusal. As here, we see who sided with the nobility, when they set up an opera against HANDEL in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and engaged Porpora and Arrigoni to compose, and placed Senesino and Segatti, till the arrival of Cuzzoni, at the head of the singers. It appears here, likewise, that Montagnana, the celebrated base-singer, Celeste, and Bertolli, two of HANDEL's female performers, as well as Arrigoni, the lutenist, with Rolli (*Rowley Powley*) the Italian opera poet, had deserted from his standard; and that Dr. Pepusch, Dr. Green, and Holcombe (Mr. *Honeycomb*), were on the side of the opponents; while Carestini, Strada, the Negri family, Durastanti and Scalzi, were at the head of his own troop.

It is now too late to determine who was the aggressor in this long and ruinous war; perhaps HANDEL exercised his power too roughly, and Senesino was too impatient of controul (*a*). Perhaps too, the nobility carried their resentment too far, in setting up another opera to the ruin of a man of such uncommon worth and abilities; and, perhaps, if HANDEL's temper had at all resembled his singer, in flexibility, a reconciliation might have been effected on no very mortifying or dishonourable terms. It is painful to dwell on this part of his life, which was one continued tissue of

(*a*) It is related by Quantz, in the Memoirs of his own Life, that Senesino had a quarrel with Heinechen, the king of Poland's maestro di capella, in 1719, which broke up the troop, and was the occasion of his coming to England. *Germ. Tour*, vol. ii. p. 176.

losses and misfortunes. He produced thirty operas between the year 1721 and 1740; yet, after the dissolution of the Academy, in 1729, none were attended with the success that was due to their intrinsic and superior merit, though some of the best were posterior to that period. Neglect and opposition conspired to rob him at once of health, fame, and fortune!

Indeed the breach with the Academy and enmity to Senesino, may with truth be said to have had some effect on his later Dramatic compositions. Senesino had so noble a voice and manner of singing, was so admirable an actor, and in such high favour with the public, that besides the real force and energy of his performance, there was an additional weight and importance given to whatever he sung, by the elevated situation in which he stood with the audience. I have been acquainted with several masters, and persons of judgment and probity, who perfectly remembering his performance and its effects on themselves and the public, assured me, that none of the great singers, who have since visited this country, ever gave such exquisite pleasure and heart-felt satisfaction as Senesino; who, without high notes or rapid execution, by the majesty and dignity of his person, gestures, voice, and expression, captivated more, though he surprized less, than Farinelli, Caffarelli, Conti detto Gizziello, Carestini, or any of their immediate successors. It is impossible for a composer to set a song to music without thinking of the talents and abilities of the singer who is to perform it, and casting the air in his particular caliber.

The singers engaged and employed by HANDEL, after the schism of Senesino, brought over a new style of singing, and were possessed of vocal feats of activity to which he was never partial; it has,
however

however been, I think, unjustly said, that the operas he composed after the quarrel "have so little to recommend them, that few would take them for the work of the same author." Can that severe sentence be reconciled to judgment, truth, and candour, in speaking of *Lotharius*, *Ariadne*, *Alcina*, *Berenice*, *Ariodante*, *Xerxes*, and *Faramond*? The voice part of his songs was generally proportioned to the abilities of his fingers, and it must be owned, that, with a few exceptions, those of his late operas, and oratorios, were not possessed of great powers either of voice, taste, expression, or execution (*a*). Yet so unbounded were his orchestra resources, that he never failed making judges of Music ample amends for deficiencies of voice or talents in a singer, by the richness and ingenuity of his accompaniments. And it may, perhaps, be said, that his best *vocal* thoughts, or melodies, seem to have been inspired by the troop for which he composed, in 1727, at the head of which were Senesino, Boschi, Cuzzoni, and Faustina, all possessed of such different kinds of excellence, as might have supported, and sung into favour, the worst Music that ever was composed. There are airs in *Siroe*, which have

(*a*) *Carestini*, *Conti detto Gizziello*, and *Cafferello*, were all great singers, in a new style of execution, which HANDEL was unwilling to flatter. *Verdi prati*, which was constantly encored during the whole run of *Alcina*, was, at first, sent back to HANDEL by Carestini, as unfit for him to sing; upon which he went, in a great rage, to his house, and in a way which few composers, except HANDEL, ever ventured to accost a *first-singer*, cries out: "You toc! don't I know better as your seluf, vaat is pest for you to sing? If you vill not sing all de song vaat I give you, I vill not pay you ein stiver."

His government of singers was certainly somewhat despotic: for, upon Cuzzoni insolently refusing to sing his admirable air, *Falsa Imagine*, in *Otho*, he told her that he always knew she was a *very Devil*; but that he should now let her know, in her turn, that he was *Beelzebub*, the *Prince of the Devils*. And then, taking her up by the waist, swore, if she did not immediately obey his orders, he would throw her out of the window.

much merit of a different kind from that which all candid judges readily allow him : for *Non vi piacque ingiusti Dei*, sung by Faustina, and *Deggio morire o stelle*, by Senesino, in that opera, are songs with quiet accompaniments in the style of the most capital modern *Airs*, in which the singer and the poet are equally respected. These were composed in 1728, about the time that Vinci and Haffé had begun to thin and simplify accompaniment, as well as to polish melody. In the first of these *Airs* the voice-part is beautiful and a *canevas* for a great singer ; in the second, the effects by modulation and broken sentences of melody are truly pathetic and theatrical : the first violin admirably filling up the chasms in the principal melody, while the second violin, tenor, and base, are murmuring in the subdued accompaniment of iterated notes in modern songs. By these two *Airs* it appears that HANDEL, who had always more solidity and contrivance than his contemporaries, penetrated very far into those regions of taste and refinement at which his successors only arrived, by a slow progress, half a century after.

We shall now quit his dramatic transactions, and confine this narration to such incidents as gave rise to the composition and public performance of his ORATORIOS, which being in our own language, have chiefly endeared him to the nation.

Sacred Dramas, or ORATORIOS, are of great antiquity in Italy, if that title be allowed to the legendary tales, mysteries, and moralities, in which hymns, psalms, songs, and chorusses, were incidentally introduced ; but the first regular sacred Drama that was wholly sung, and in which the Dialogue was carried on in *Recitative*, was entitled *Anima e Corpo* ; it was set to music by Emilio del Cavalieri, and first performed at Rome, in

in February, 1600, the same year as secular musical Dramas, or OPERAS, had their beginning at Florence. The Sacred Dramas, which, during the last century, were performed in the churches and convents of Italy, and generally in action, are innumerable; but the title of ORATORIO was first given to this species of *Mystery in Music*, by Francesco Balducci, about 1645, after which time it became the general term for such productions (a). Indeed it appears from the *Dramaturgia* of Italy, that more *Drame Sacre*, or *Rappresentazioni Musicali*, on religious subjects, were performed at Palermo, and, even Naples, during the latter end of the last century, and beginning of this, than secular. At the church of *S. Girolamo della Carità*, and *La Chiesa Nuova*, at Rome, Oratorios are still constantly performed on Sundays, from All-Saints day till Palm-Sunday, and on all festivals; and the conservatorios at Venice are still constant in the use of these Dramas.

Esther, composed for the duke of Chandos, in 1720, was the first Oratorio which HANDEL set to music. And eleven years after its performance at Cannons, a copy of the score having been obtained, it was represented, in action, by the Children of his Majesty's Chapel, at the house of Mr. Bernard Gates, master of the boys, in James-street, Westminster, on Wednesday, February 23, 1731 (b). The Chorus, consisting of performers from

(a) Quadrio, *Storia d'ogni Poesia*, tom. v. p. 495. The word *Oratorio* had its origin from the early introduction of a more artificial kind of music than *canto fermo*, or the mass in a constant chorus of four parts, at the ORATORY of San Filippo Neri, at Rome, who died 1595.

(b) Dr. Randal of Cambridge, Mr. Beard, and Mr. Barrow, still living, were among the children who performed on this occasion.

This Oratorio, and *Athalie*, seem both to have been taken from Racine's two celebrated tragedies of *Esther* and *Athalie*, written for music,

from the Chapel-Royal and Westminster-Abbey, was placed after the manner of the ancients, between the stage and orchestra; and the instrumental parts were chiefly performed by Gentlemen who were members of the Philharmonic Society. After this, it was performed by the same fingers at the Crown and Anchor, which is said to have first suggested to HANDEL the idea of bringing Oratorios on the stage. And in 1732, *Esther* was performed at the Haymarket, Ten Nights. In March, 1733, *Deborah* was first given to the public; and in April *Esther* was again exhibited at the same theatre. It was during these performances of Oratorios, that HANDEL first gratified the public by the performance of CONCERTOS ON THE ORGAN, a species of Music wholly of his own invention (*a*), in which he usually introduced an extempore fugue, a diapason-piece, or an adagio, manifesting not only the wonderful fertility and readiness of his invention, but the most perfect accuracy and neatness of execution (*b*).

It was in the summer of 1733, that he went to the university of Oxford, on occasion of a public act, taking with him Carestini, Strada, and his opera band: at this solemnity he had the Oratorio of *Athalia* performed in the public theatre, where he opened the organ in such a manner as astonished every hearer. The late Mr. Michael Christian

music, and performed at the convent of St. Cyr, founded by madame de Maintenon. Nothing, however, but the Choruses of these sacred Dramas was ever sung in France, nor was the music of these Choruses set by Lulli, as inadvertently asserted in the former Life of HANDEL. Indeed, Lulli, unluckily, died two years before the first of these tragedies was represented; that is, in 1687, and *Esther* was not performed at St. Cyr, till 1689.

(*a*) Rameau's *Livre de Pieces de Clavecin en Concerts*, did not appear till 1741.

(*b*) The favourite movement, at the end of his second organ-concerto, was long called the *Minuet in the Oratorio of Esther*, from the circumstance of its having been first heard in the concerto which he played between the parts of that Oratorio.

Festing,

Festing, and Dr. Arne, who were present, both assured me, that neither themselves, nor any one else of their acquaintance, had ever before heard such extempore, or such premeditated playing on that or any other instrument.

In the Lent of 1734, he performed *Esther*, *Deborah*, and *Athalia*, at Covent-Garden; and in 1735, *Esther*, *Acis and Galatea*, and *Alexander's Feast*, for the first time. In 1738, *Israel in Egypt*, and 1739, *Allegro ed il Penseroso*. During these last two years the Opera-house was shut, and HANDEL's affairs were at this time so deranged, that he was under constant apprehensions of being arrested by Del Pò, the husband of Strada. This stimulated his friends to persuade him to have a benefit; and, in following their advice, he received such testimonies of public favour at the Opera-house, in the Haymarket, March 28, 1738, as proved extremely lucrative; for, besides every usual part of the house being uncommonly crowded, when the curtain drew up, five hundred persons of rank and fashion were discovered on the stage, which was formed into an amphitheatre (a).

In 1740, the Oratorio of *Saul* was performed, for the first time, at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields; and from this period, HANDEL may be said to have devoted his labours solely to the service of the church; as, except his *grand Concertos for Violins*, and the *Fire-work Music*, for the Peace of Aix la Chapelle, in 1748; I remember no

(a) This performance was called an *Oratorio*; but in examining the printed book of the words, with which I have been favoured by Mr. Belchier, one of HANDEL's few surviving friends, it appears that this exhibition was miscellaneous; consisting of a mixture of sacred and prophane, of English and Italian Airs and Recitatives, without the least connection either in the words or music.

other compositions than Oratorios, that were either performed or published by him (a).

During the first years of his retreat from the Opera stage, the profits arising from the performance of Oratorios were not sufficient to indemnify his losses; and it would remain a perpetual stigma on the taste of the nation, if it should be recorded, that his MESSIAH, that truly noble and sublime work, was not only ill-attended, but ill-received, on its first performance in 1741, were its miscarriage not to be wholly ascribed to the resentment of the many great personages whom he had offended, in refusing to compose for Senesino, by whom he thought himself affronted; or even for the Opera, unless that singer were dismissed; which inflexibility being construed into insolence, was the cause of powerful oppositions that were at once oppressive and mortifying.

HANDEL had been so unfortunate in all his attempts to carry on operas at the three several theatres of the Haymarket, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and Covent-Garden, in opposition to his former protectors, the members of the Royal Academy, that he was reduced to the necessity of drawing out of the funds ten thousand pounds, which he had lodged there in his more prosperous days; and still Strada, Montagnana, and other singers employed in his last Operas were unpaid, and obliged to quit this country with promissory notes instead of cash.

(a) From 1740, when he totally quitted the Opera-stage, to 1751, he produced fifteen original Oratorios, and adapted English words to the music of a serenata, or morality, *Il Trionfo del Tempo*, (the Triumph of Time and Truth) which he had set to Italian words, at Rome, 1709. Of these, the *Messiah*, *Samson*, and *Judas Macchabeus*, were sure to fill the house whenever they were performed; but though the rest are hazardous, and fluctuating in favour, yet there is no one of them which an exquisite and darling singer, such as Mrs. Sheridan, or Mrs. Bates, could not render important and attractive.

HANDEL, however, who was a man of strict probity, and accustomed to pay his performers not only honestly, but generously, discharged these debts very honourably, as soon as he was able.

It was after these repeated miscarriages, and a very severe illness, supposed to have been brought on by the joint effects of anxiety, mortification, distress, and disappointment, that he went to Ireland, in order to try whether his Oratorios would be out of the reach of prejudice and enmity in that kingdom. Pope, on this occasion personifying the Italian Opera, put into her mouth the following well-known lines, which she addresses to the goddess of Dulness.

“ Strong in new arms, lo! Giant HANDEL stands,”
 “ Like bold Briareus, with his hundred hands;
 “ To flit, to rouse, to shake the soul he comes,
 “ And Jove’s own thunders follow Mars’s drums.
 “ Arrest him, empress; or you sleep no more—
 “ She heard;—and drove him to the Hibernian shore (a).”

On

(a) When HANDEL went through Chester, in his way to Ireland, this year, 1741, I was at the Public School in that city, and very well remember seeing him smoke a pipe, over a dish of coffee, at the Exchange Coffee-house; for being extremely curious to see so extraordinary a man, I watched him narrowly as long as he remained in Chester; which, on account of the wind being unfavourable for his embarking at Parkgate, was several days. During this time, he applied to Mr. Baker, the Organist, my first music-master, to know whether there were any choirmen in the cathedral who could sing *at sight*; as he wished to prove some books that had been hastily transcribed, by trying the choruses which he intended to perform in Ireland. Mr. Baker mentioned some of the most likely singers then in Chester, and, among the rest, a printer of the name of Janson, who had a good base voice, and was one of the best musicians in the choir. At this time Harry Alcock, a good player, was the first violin at Chester, which was then a very musical place; for besides public performances, Mr. Prebendary Prescott had a weekly concert, at which he was able to muster eighteen or twenty performers, gentlemen, and professors. A time was fixed for this private rehearsal at the *Golden Falcon*, where HANDEL was quartered; but, alas! on trial of the chorus in the *Messiah*, “ *And with his*
“ stripes

On his arrival at Dublin, with equal judgment and humanity, he began by performing the Messiah, for the benefit of the city prison. This act of generosity and benevolence met with universal approbation, as well as his Music; which, after spending some time in the discipline of his troops, was admirably performed, with Dubourg for leader, and the late Mrs. Cibber, to sing, "*He was despised and rejected of men.*" This air, the first, perhaps, in our language, has been often sung by Italian singers of the greatest abilities, but never, I believe, in a manner so truly touching to an Englishman, as by Mrs. Cibber, for whom it was originally composed; and whose voice, though a mere thread, and knowledge of Music, inconsiderable; yet, by a natural pathos, and perfect conception of the words, she often penetrated the heart, when others, with infinitely greater voice and skill, could only reach the ear (a).

HANDEL remained eight or nine months in Ireland, where he extended his fame, and began to repair his fortune. At his return to London, in the beginning of 1742, as he had relinquished all thoughts of opposing the present managers of the Opera, former enmities began to subside; and, when he recommenced his Oratorios at Covent-Garden, the Lent following, he found a general disposition in

"*Stripes we are healed,*"—Poor Janſon, after repeated attempts, failed ſo egregiouſly, that HANDEL let looſe his great bear upon him; and after ſwearing in four or five languages, cried out in broken Engliſh; "You ſheautrel! tit not you dell me dat you could ſing at ſoite?"—"Yes, ſir, ſays the printer, and ſo I can; but not at *fiſt fight.*"

(a) One night, while HANDEL was in Dublin, Dubourg having a ſolo part in a ſong, and a cloſe to make, *ad libitum*, he wandered about in different keys a great while, and ſeemed indeed a little bewildered, and uncertain of his original key . . . but, at length, coming to the ſhake, which was to terminate this long cloſe, HANDEL, to the great delight of the audience, and augmentation of applauſe, cried out loud enough to be heard in the moſt remote parts of the theatre: "You are welcome home, Mr. Dubourg!"

the

the public to countenance and support him. *Samson* was the first he performed this year, which was not only much applauded by crowded houses in the capital, but was soon disseminated, in single songs, throughout the kingdom; and, indeed, it has ever been in the highest favour of all his Oratorios, except the *MESSIAH*, which this season, to the honour of the public at large, and disgrace of cabal and faction, was received with universal admiration and applause. And from that time to the present, this great work has been heard in all parts of the kingdom with increasing reverence and delight; it has fed the hungry, clothed the naked, fostered the orphan, and enriched succeeding managers of Oratorios, more than any single musical production in this or any country.

This *Sacred Oratorio*, as it was at first called, on account of the words being wholly composed of genuine texts of Scripture, appearing to stand in such high estimation with the public, HANDEL, actuated by motives of the purest benevolence and humanity, formed the laudable resolution of performing it annually for the benefit of the Foundling Hospital, which resolution was constantly put in practice, to the end of his life, under his own direction; and, long after, under that of Mr. Smith and Mr. Stanley. In consequence of these performances, the benefactions to the charity from the year 1749 to 1759, by eleven performances under HANDEL's own direction, amounted to

	£.6935 0 0
From 1760 to 1768, by eight performances under the conduct of	
Mr. John Christian Smith	1332 0 0
From 1769 to 1777, nine performances under that of Mr. Stanley	2032 0 0

£.10,299 0 0

The

The organ in the chapel of this hospital was likewise a present from HANDEL; and he bequeathed, as a legacy to this charity, a fair copy of the original score of the MESSIAH.

From the time of his quitting Ireland, with little opposition, and a few thin houses, in consequence of great assemblies of the nobility and gentry, manifestly and cruelly collected together on his nights of performance, with hostile intentions, by some implacable remains of his most powerful adversaries, he continued his Oratorios till within a week of his death(a).

But though the Oratorio of the MESSIAH increased in reputation every year, after his return from Ireland, and the crouds that flocked to the theatre were more considerable every time it was performed; yet, to some of his other Oratorios, the houses were so thin, as not nearly to defray his expences; which, as he always employed a very numerous band, and paid his performers liberally, so deranged his affairs, that in the year 1745, after two performances of *Hercules*, January 5th and 12th, before the Lent season, he stopped payment. He, however, resumed the performance of his Oratorios of *Samson*, *Saul*, *Joseph*, *Belshazzar*, and the *Messiah*, in March; but I perfectly remember, that none were well attended, except *Samson*, and the MESSIAH(b).

His

(a) The last season of HANDEL's personal attendance and of his life was remarkably successful. One of my friends, who was generally at the performance of each Oratoria that year, and who used to visit him after it was over, in the treasurer of the theatre's office, says, that the money he used to take to his carriage of a night, though in gold and silver, was as likely to weigh him down and throw him into a fever, as the copper-money of the painter Coreggio, if he had had as far to carry it.

(b) In 1749, *Theodora* was so very unfortunately abandoned, that he was glad if any professors, who did not perform, would accept of tickets or orders for admission. Two gentlemen of that description,

His late majesty king George the Second, was a steady patron of HANDEL during these times, and constantly attended his Oratorios, when they were abandoned by the rest of his court(*a*).

HANDEL, late in life, like the great poets, Homer and Milton, was afflicted with blindness; which, however it might dispirit and embarrass him at other times, had no effect on his nerves or intellects, in public: as he continued to play concertos and voluntaries between the parts of his Oratorios to the last, with the same vigour of thought and touch, for which he was ever so justly renowned. To see him, however, led to the organ, after this calamity, at upwards of seventy years of age, and then conducted towards the audience to make his accustomed obeisance, was a sight so truly afflicting and deplorable to persons of sensibility, as greatly diminished their pleasure in hearing him perform.

During the Oratorio season, I have been told that he practised almost incessantly; and indeed that must have been the case, or his memory uncommonly retentive; for after his blindness he played several of his *old* organ-concertos, which must have been previously impressed on his me-

description, now living, having applied to HANDEL, after the disgrace of *Theodora*, for an order to hear the MESSIAH, he cried out, "Oh your sarvant, Mien-herren! you are tamnaple tainty! "you would not co to TEODORA—der was room enough to dance "dere, when dat was perform."

Sometimes, however, I have heard him, as pleasantly as philosophically, console his friends, when, previous to the curtain being drawn up, they have lamented that the house was so empty, by saying, "Nevre moind; de moosic vil sound de petter."

(*a*) About this time a *bon mot* of lord Chesterfield's was handed about by a nobleman, still living, who going one night to the Oratorio at Covent-Garden, met his lordship coming out of the theatre. "What! my lord, are you dismissed? Is there no "Oratorio to-night?" "Yes," says his lordship, "they are now "performing; but I thought it best to retire, lest I should disturb "the king in his *privacies*."

mory

mory by practice. At last, however, he rather chose to trust to his inventive powers, than those of reminiscence : for, giving the band only the skeleton, or ritornels of each movement, he played all the solo parts extempore, while the other instruments left him, *ad libitum* ; waiting for the signal of a shake, before they played such fragments of symphony as they found in their books.

Indeed, he not only continued to perform in public after he was afflicted with blindness, but to *compose* in private ; for I have been assured, that the Duet and Chorus in *Judas Macchabæus*, of “ *Sion now his head shall raise, Tune your harps to songs of praise,*” were dictated to Mr. Smith, by HANDEL, after the total privation of sight. This composition, so late in life, and under such depressing circumstances, confirms an opinion of Dr. Johnson, “ that it seldom happens to men of “ powerful intellects and original genius, to be “ robbed of mental vigour, by age ; it is only “ the feeble-minded and *fool-born* part of the crea- “ tion, who fall into that species of imbecility, “ which gives occasion to say that they are *super- “ annuated* : for these, when they retire late in life “ from the world on which they have lived by re- “ tailing the sense of others, are instantly re- “ duced to indigence of mind.” Dryden, Newton, Dr. Johnson himself, and our great Musician, are admirable illustrations of this doctrine. Indeed, HANDEL not only exhibited great intellectual ability in the composition of this Duet and Chorus, but manifested his power of invention in extemporaneous flights of fancy to be as rich and rapid, a week before his decease, as they had been for many years. He was always much disturbed and agitated by the similar circumstances of *Samson*, whenever the affecting air in that Oratorio of “ *Total*

"*Total Eclipse, no Sun, no Moon,*" &c. was performed.

The last Oratorio at which he attended, and performed, was on the 6th of April, and he expired on *Friday* the 13th, 1759, and *not on Saturday the 14th*, as was at first erroneously engraved on his Monument, and recorded in his Life; I have indisputable authority for the contrary: as Dr. Warren, who attended HANDEL in his last sickness, not only remembers his dying before midnight, on the 13th, but, that he was sensible of his approaching dissolution; and having been always impressed with a profound reverence for the doctrines and duties of the Christian religion, that he had most seriously and devoutly wished, for several days before his death, that he might breath his last on *Good-Friday*, "in hopes, he" said, of meeting his Good God, his sweet "Lord and Saviour, on the day of his resurrection," meaning the third day, or the Easter Sunday following.

The figure of HANDEL was large, and he was somewhat corpulent, and unwieldy in his motions; but his countenance, which I remember as perfectly as that of any man I saw but yesterday, was full of fire and dignity; and such as impressed ideas of superiority and genius. He was impetuous, rough, and peremptory in his manners and conversation, but totally devoid of ill-nature or malevolence; indeed, there was an original humour and pleasantry in his most lively sallies of anger or impatience, which, with his broken English, were extremely risible. His natural propensity to wit and humour, and happy manner of relating common occurrences, in an uncommon way, enabled him to throw persons and things into very ridiculous attitudes. Had he been as great a master of the English language
as

as Swift, his *bons mots* would have been as frequent, and somewhat of the same kind.

HANDEL, with many virtues, was addicted to no vice that was injurious to society. Nature, indeed, required a great supply of sustenance to support so huge a mass, and he was rather epicurean in the choice of it; but this seems to have been the only appetite he allowed himself to gratify (a).

When

(a) The late Mr. Brown, leader of his majesty's band, used to tell me several stories of HANDEL's love of good cheer, liquid and solid, as well as of his impatience. Of the former he gave an instance, which was accidentally discovered at his own house in Brook-street, where Brown, in the Oratorio season, among other principal performers, was at dinner. During the repast, HANDEL often cried out—"Oh—I have de taught;" when the company, unwilling that, out of civility to them, the public should be robbed of any thing so valuable as his musical ideas, begged, he would retire and write them down; with which request, however, he so frequently complied, that, at last, one of the most suspicious had the ill-bred curiosity to peep through the key-hole into the adjoining room; where he perceived that *de-se taughts*, were only bestowed on a fresh hamper of *Burgundy*, which, as was afterwards discovered, he had received in a present from his friend, the late lord Radnor, while his company was regaled with more generous and *spirited* port.

Another anecdote which I had from Brown, was the following: When the late reverend Mr. Felton found that his first organ concertos were well received, he opened a subscription for a second set, and begged of Brown to solicit Mr. HANDEL's permission to insert his name in the list. Brown, who had been in great favour with HANDEL the winter before, when he led his Oratorios, remembering how civilly he had been attended by him to the door, and how carefully cautioned, after being heated by a crowded room and hard labour, at the rehearsals in Brook-street, not to stir without a chair, had no doubt of his success: but, upon mentioning to him Felton's request, as delicately as possible, one morning when he was shaving, by telling him that he was a clergyman, who being about to publish some Concertos by subscription, was extremely ambitious of the honour of his name and acceptance of a book, merely to grace his list, without involving him in any kind of expence; HANDEL, putting the barber's hand aside, got up in a fury, and, with his face still in a lather, cries out with great vehemence: "Tamn your seluf, and go to "der teiffel—a barfon make Concerto! why he no make far—" mon?" &c. In short, Brown seeing him in such a rage, with razors in his reach, got out of the room as fast as he could; lest he should have used them in a more *barbarous* way than would be safe. Indeed, he had a thorough contempt for all our composers

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When Pope found that his friends, lord Burlington and Dr. Arbuthnot, thought so highly of HANDEL, he not only lashed his enemies in the *Dunciad*, but wished to have his *Eurydice* set to Music by him. Mr. Belchier, a common friend, undertook to negotiate the business: but HANDEL having heard that Pope had made his Ode more lyrical, that is, fitter for Music, by dividing it into airs and recitatives, for Dr. Green, who had already set it; and whom, as a partizan for Bononcini, and confederated with his enemies, he had long disliked, says, “It is de very ding
“vat my *pellows-plower* has set already for ein
“tocktor’s tecree at Cambridge (a).”

When Gluck came first into England, in 1745, he was neither so great a composer, nor so high in reputation, as he afterwards mounted; and I remember when Mrs. Cibber, in my hearing, asked HANDEL what sort of a composer he was; his answer, prefaced by an oath—was, “he knows
“no more of contrapunto, as mein cook,
“Waltz.”

at this time, from Dr. Green down to Harry Burgeis; and performers on the organ too: for, after being long an inhabitant of this country, he used to say, “When I came hither first, I found,
“among the English, many good players, and no composers;
“but now, they are all composers, and no players.”

(a) Dr. Green took his degree at that university in 1730. Indeed, on HANDEL’s first arrival in England, from Green’s great admiration of this master’s manner of playing, he had sometimes literally condescended to become his *bellows-blower*, when he went to St. Paul’s to play on that organ, for the exercise it afforded him, in the use of the pedals. HANDEL, after the three o’clock prayers, used frequently to get himself and young Green locked up in the church, together; and, in summer, often stripped into his shirt, and played till eight or nine o’clock at night. Dr. Green, previous to his admission into St. Paul’s, as a chorister, was taught to sing by the late Mr. Charles King; he was afterwards bound apprentice to Brind, the organist of that cathedral, and was, at the time alluded to by HANDEL, either still an apprentice, or, at least, a very young man, and deputy to the organist, whom he afterwards succeeded.

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But though he was so rough in his language, and in the habit of swearing, a vice then much more in fashion than at present, he was truly pious during the last years of his life, and constantly attended public prayers, twice a day, winter and summer, both in London and Tunbridge.

At the coronation of his late majesty, George the Second, in 1727, HANDEL had words sent to him, by the bishops, for the anthems; at which he murmured, and took offence, as he thought it implied his ignorance of the Holy Scriptures: "I have read my Bible very well, and shall chuse for myself." And, indeed, his selection of the words, "*My heart is inditing of a good matter,*" was very judicious, and inspired him with some of the finest thoughts that are to be found in all his works. This anthem was sung at the coronation, while the peers were doing homage.

He knew the value of time too well to spend it in frivolous pursuits, or with futile companions, however high in rank. Fond of his art, and diligent in its cultivation, and the exercise of it, as a profession, he spent so studious and sedentary a life, as seldom allowed him to mix in society, or partake of public amusements. Indeed, after my first arrival in London, 1744, he seldom was absent from the benefit for Decayed Musicians and their Families; and I have sometimes seen him at the Playhouses, the Opera, and at St. Martin's church, when the late Mr. Kelway played the organ. But those who were more intimately acquainted with him than myself, say, that in his latter years, except when he went to pay his duty to the royal family at St. James's, or Leicester-House, he seldom visited the great, or was visible, but at church, and the performance of his own Oratorios.

Besides

Besides seeing HANDEL myself at his own house in Brook-street, and at Carlton-House, where he had rehearsals of his Oratorios, by meeting him at Mrs. Cibber's and at Frafi's, who was then my scholar, I acquired considerable knowledge of his private character, and turn for humour. He was very fond of Mrs. Cibber, whose voice and manners had softened his severity for her want of musical knowledge. At her house, on a Sunday evening, he used to meet Quin, who, in spite of native roughness was very fond of Music. Yet the first time Mrs. Cibber prevailed on HANDEL to sit down to the harpsichord while he was present, on which occasion I remember the great Musician played the overture in *Siroe*, and delighted us all with the marvellous neatness with which he played the jig, at the end of it.—Quin, after HANDEL was gone, being asked by Mrs. Cibber, whether he did not think Mr. HANDEL had a charming hand? replied —“*a hand*, madam! you mistake, it's a *foot*,” —“*Poh! poh!* says she, has he not a fine finger?” —“*Toes*, by G—, madam!” —Indeed, his hand was then so fat, that the knuckles, which usually appear convex, were like those of a child, dented or dimpled in, so as to be rendered concave; however, his touch was so smooth, and the tone of the instrument so much cherished, that his fingers seemed to grow to the keys. They were so curved and compact when he played, that no motion, and scarcely the fingers themselves, could be discovered.

At Frafi's, I remember, in the year 1748, he brought in his pocket the duet of *Judas Macchabæus*, “*From these dread Scenes*,” in which she had not sung when that Oratorio was first performed in 1746. At the time he sat down to the harpsichord, to give her and me the time of it, while he sung her part, I hummed, at sight, the second,

over his shoulder; in which he encouraged me, by desiring that I would sing out—but unfortunately something went wrong, and HANDEL with his usual impetuosity grew violent: a circumstance very terrific to a young musician.—At length, however, recovering from my fright, I ventured to say, that I fancied there was a mistake in the writing; which, upon examining HANDEL discovered to be the case: and then, instantly, with the greatest good humour and humility, said, “I pec your barton—I am a very odd tog:—“maishter Schmitt is to plame.”

When Frasi told him, that she should study hard, and was going to learn Thorough-Base, in order to accompany herself: HANDEL, who well knew how little this pleasing finger was addicted to application and diligence, says, “Oh—vaat “may we not expect!”

HANDEL wore an enormous white wig, and, when things went well at the Oratorio, it had a certain nod, or vibration, which manifested his pleasure and satisfaction. Without it, nice observers were certain that he was out of humour.

At the close of an air, the voice with which he used to cry out, CHORUS! was extremely formidable indeed; and, at the rehearsals of his Oratorios, at Carleton-House, if the prince and princess of Wales were not exact in coming into the Music-Room, he used to be very violent; yet, such was the reverence with which his Royal Highness treated him, that, admitting HANDEL to have had cause of complaint, he has been heard to say, “Indeed, it is cruel to have kept these poor people, meaning the performers, so long from their “scholars, and other concerns.” But if the maids of honour, or any other female attendants, talked, during the performance, I fear that our modern Timotheus, not only swore, but called names;

names ; yet, at such times, the princess of Wales, with her accustomed mildness and benignity, used to say, “ Hush ! hush ! HANDEL’s in a passion.”

HANDEL was in the habit of talking to himself, so loud, that it was easy for persons, not very near him, to hear the subject of his soliloquies. He had, by much persuasion, received under his roof and protection, a boy, who had been represented, not only as having an uncommon disposition for music, but for sobriety and diligence : this boy, however, turned out ill, and ran away, no one, for a considerable time, knew whither. During this period, HANDEL walking in the Park, as he thought, alone, was heard to commune with himself in the following manner :—“ Der teifel ! de fater vas desheevd ;—de mutter vas desheevd ; —but I vas not desheevd ;—he is ein t—d shcauntrel—and coot for nutting.”

HANDEL’s general look was somewhat heavy and sour ; but when he *did* smile, it was his fire the sun, bursting out of a black cloud. There was a sudden flash of intelligence, wit, and good humour, beaming in his countenance, which I hardly ever saw in any other.

It has been said of him, that, out of his profession, he was ignorant and dull ; but though I do not admit the fact, yet, if the charge were as true as it is severe, it must be allowed, in extenuation, that to possess a difficult art in the perfect manner he did, and to be possessed by it, seems a natural consequence ; and all that the public had a right to expect, as he pretended to nothing more. Accomplishments can only amuse our private friends, and ourselves, in leisure hours ; but so occupied and absorbed was HANDEL, by the study and exercise of his profession, that he had little time to bestow, either on private amusements, or the cultivation of friendship. Indeed,
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the credit and reverence arising from these, had HANDEL possessed them, would have been transient, and confined to his own age and acquaintance; whereas the fame acquired by silent and close application to his professional business,

—*Nec Jovis ira, nec ignes,
Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetustas.*

And it is probable, that his name, like that of many of his brethren, will long survive his works. The most learned man can give us no information concerning either the private life or compositions of Orpheus, Amphion, Linus, Olympus, Terpander, or Timotheus, yet every school-boy can tell us, that they were *great Musicians*, the delight of their several ages, and many years after, of posterity.

Though totally free from the sordid vices of meanness and avarice, and possessed of their opposite virtues, charity and generosity, in spite of temporary adversity, powerful enemies, and frequent maladies of body, which sometimes extended to intellect, HANDEL died worth upwards of Twenty Thousand Pounds; which, except One Thousand to the Fund for decayed Musicians and their Families, he chiefly bequeathed to his relations on the continent.

His funeral was not public, like that of Rameau, in France; of Jomelli, in Italy; or of our Dryden, and Garrick, in England; yet, when he was buried in Westminster-Abbey, April the 20th, 1759, the dean, Dr. Pearce, bishop of Rochester, assisted by the choir, performed the funeral solemnity. More general and national testimonies of regard were left to the present period, when all enmities, jealousies, and operations of envy had subsided; and when time,
exami-

examination, and reflexion, had given new charms and importance to his works. And this pleasing task has been performed in a way so ample, magnificent, and honourable, that it will be difficult to find, either in ancient or modern history, a more liberal and splendid example of gratitude to a deceased artist, in any other country.

CHARACTER of HANDEL as a COMPOSER.

THAT HANDEL was superior in the strength and boldness of his style, the richness of his harmony, and complication of parts, to every composer who has been most admired for such excellencies, cannot be disputed. And, while *fugue*, *contrivance*, and a *full score*, were more generally revered than at present, he remained wholly unrivalled.

I know it has been said that HANDEL was not the original and immediate inventor of several species of Music, for which his name has been celebrated; but, with respect to *originality*, it is a term to which proper limits should be set, before it is applied to the productions of any artist. Every *invention* is clumsy in its beginning, and Shakspeare was not the first writer of *Plays*, or Corelli the first composer of *violin Solos*, *Sonatas*, and *Concertos*, though those which he produced are the best of his time; nor was Milton the inventor of *Epic Poetry*. The scale, harmony, and cadence of Music, being settled, it is impossible for any composer to invent a *genus* of composition that is *wholly and rigorously new*, any more than for a poet to form a *language*, *idiom*, and *phraseology*, for himself. All that the greatest and boldest musical inventor *can* do, is to avail himself of the best effusions, combinations, and effects, of his predecessors; to arrange and apply them in a new manner; and to add, from his own source, whatever he can draw, that is grand, graceful, gay, pathetic, or, in any other way, pleasing. This HANDEL did, in a most ample and superior manner; being possessed, in his middle

dle age and full vigour, of every refinement and perfection of his time: uniting the depth and elaborate contrivance of his own country, with Italian elegance and facility; as he seems, while he resided south of the Alps, to have listened attentively in the church, theatre, and chamber, to the most exquisite compositions and performers, of every kind, that were then existing.

And though we had CANTATAS by Carissimi, Alessandro Scarlatti, Gasparini, and Marcello; DUETS by Steffani and Clari; VOCAL CHORUSES, without instrumental accompaniments, by Palestrina, and our own Tallis, Bird, and Purcell; and, with accompaniments, by Carissimi, as well as Paolo Colonna; with VIOLIN SONATAS and CONCERTOS by Corelli and Geminiani; yet it may with the utmost truth be asserted, that HANDEL added considerable beauties to whatever style or species of composition he adopted, which, in a larger work, it would not be difficult to demonstrate, by examples. At present I shall only venture to give it as part of my musical *profession de foi*, that his *air* or *melody* is greatly superior to any that can be found in the otherwise charming Cantatas which Carissimi seems to have invented; that he is more natural in his voice-parts, and has given more *movement* to his *bases* than Alef. Scarlatti; that he has more *force* and *originality* than Gasparini or Marcello; that his *chamber duets* are, at least, equal to those of Steffani and Clari, who were remarkable for no other species of composition; and though the late Dr. Boyce used to say that HANDEL had great obligations to Colonna for his CHORUSES *with instrumental accompaniments*, it seems indisputable that such choruses were infinitely more obliged to HANDEL than he to Colonna, or, indeed, than they were

58 CHARACTER of HANDEL as a Composer.

were to all the Composers that have ever existed. It is my belief, likewise, that the best of his *Italian Opera Songs* surpasses, in variety of style and ingenuity of accompaniment, those of all preceding and cotemporary Composers throughout Europe; that he has more *fire* in his compositions for violins, than Corelli, and more *rhythm* than Gemini-ani; that in his full, masterly, and excellent *organ-fugues*, upon the most natural and pleasing subjects, he has surpassed Frescobaldi, and even Sebastian Bach, and others of his countrymen, the most renowned for abilities in this difficult and elaborate species of composition; and, lastly, that all the judicious and unprejudiced Musicians of every country, upon hearing or perusing his noble, majestic, and frequently sublime FULL ANTHEMS, and ORATORIA CHORUSES, must allow, with readiness and rapture, that they are utterly unacquainted with any thing equal to them, among the works of the greatest masters that have existed since the invention of counterpoint.

CHRO.

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O P E R A S.			publickly performed in		
RODRIGO, performed at			London 1732		
	Florence	1709	DEBORAH	—	} 1733
AGRIPPINA	- Venice	1709	ATHALIA	Oxford	
RADAMISTO	- London	1720	ACIS and GALATEA, at		
MUZIO SCEVOLA	—	1721	Cannons, 1721, publick-		
OTTONE	-	1722	ly performed in London		1735
GIULIO CESARE	}	— 1723	ALEXANDER'S FEAST	—	1735
FLORIDANTE			ST. CECILIA'S ODE	—	1736
FLAVIO			ISRAEL IN EGYPT	—	1738
TAMERLANO	-	1724	L'ALLEGRO ED IL PEN-		
RODELINDA	-	1725	SEROSO	-	1739
ALESSANDRO	}	— 1726	SAUL	-	1740
SCIPIONE			MESSIAH	-	1741
RICARDO PRIMO	—	1727	SAMSON	-	1742
TOLOMEO	}	— 1728	SEMELE	}	— 1743
SIROE			BELSHAZZAR		
LOTARIO	- London	1729	SUSANNA	—	
PARTENOPE	-	1730	HERCULES	-	1744
PORO	-	1731	OCCASIONAL ORATORIO		
ORLANDO	}	— 1732	JOSEPH	}	— 1745
SOSARME			JUDAS MACCHA-		
ARIANNA	}	— 1733	BÆUS	}	— 1746
EZIO			JOSHUA		
ARIODANTE	-	1734	ALEXANDER BA-	}	— 1747
ALCINA	-	1735	LUS		
ARMINIO	}	— 1736	SOLOMON	-	1749
ATALANTA			THEODORA	- London	1750
GIUSTINO	}	— 1737	JEPHTHA	-	1751
BERENICE					
FARAMONDO	-	1738	MISCELLANEOUS WORKS.		
SERSE	-	1738	ANTHEMS, 8 vols.		
IMENEO	}	— 1740	CANTATAS, 4 vols.		
DEIDAMIA			TE DEUMS and JUBI-		
			LATE, 3 vols.		
O R A T O R I O S.					
ESTHER, composed 1720,					
O P E R A					

60 LIST OF HANDEL'S WORKS.

OPERA SONGS, 2 vols.	TESEO - }	— 1712
LAUDATE.	PASTOR FIDO }	— 1715
COLLECTION OF SONGS	AMADIGE -	— 1727
AND CHORUSES.	AMMETO -	— 1737
MOTETTI é DUETTI.	ALESSANDRO SEVERO,	— 1740
IL TRIONFO DEL } Rome 1709	PASTICCIO	— 1716
TEMPO - } Lond. 1737	PARNASSO IN FESTA	— 1748
ACIGE E GALATEA	WATER-MUSIC	— 1751
Napoli 1709	FIRE-WORK MUSIC	— 1745
ORATORIO ITALIANO.	TRIUMPH OF TIME AND	
CANTATE.	TRUTH -	— 1720
CONCERTI.	CHOICE OF HERCULES	— 1703
CONCERTI GROSSI.		— 1709
Transcript of VI SONA-	SONATAS for two Violins	
TAS for two Hautbois	and a Base, two sets.	
and a Base - - - 1694	HARPSICHORD LESSONS,	
	Two Books: the first	
Not in HIS MAJESTY'S Col-	appeared in -	1711
lection.	FUGUES for the Organ.	
ALMIRA, an Opera, per-	ORGAN CONCERTOS,	
formed at Hamburg } 1705	Three Sets.	
NERO - - -	CANTATAS, composed at	
FLORINDO } 1708	Hamburg, between	1703
DAFNE } and 1709		
RINALDO - London 1711	DITTO at Rome, 1709 and 1710	

The late Mr. Walsh, of Catherine-street, in the Strand, purchased of HANDEL, for publication, transcripts of the Manuscript scores of almost all the works he had composed in England; and Mr. Wright, of the same place, successor to Mr. Walsh, is still in possession of these Manuscripts, many of which have never yet been published. Little more than the favourite songs of his Italian Operas, and those incorrectly, and in different forms, have, as yet, been printed. Of his Oratorios, besides the favourite Airs in all of them, Mr. Walsh's successors have published complete and uniform scores of the MESSIAH, JUDAS MACCHABÆUS, SAMSON, JEPHTHA, ISRAEL IN EGYPT, JOSHUA, SAUL, ESTHER, CHOICE OF HERCULES, L'ALLEGRO ED IL PENSEROSO, DRYDEN'S ODE, ALEXANDER'S FEAST, ACIS AND GALATEA, BELSHASSAR, SUSANNAH, THE OCCASIONAL ORATORIO, and DEBORAH.

Besides

LIST OF HANDEL'S WORKS. 61

Besides these, and his four CORONATION ANTHEMS, FUNERAL ANTHEMS, GRAND TE DEUM, JUBILATE, and DETTINGEN TE DEUM, complete Scores of HANDEL'S TEN ANTHEMS, for voices and instruments, composed chiefly for the duke of Chandos, at Cannons, have been published by Mr. Wright, in three volumes. The same publisher is still in possession of many of his inedited Works: as Italian Duets, Cantatas, Songs, Anthems, Sonatas, some for violins, and some for German flutes and a base, with several other miscellaneous productions.

In the collection of the earl of Aylesford, formed by the late Mr. Jennings; and in that of Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, are preserved in MS. many valuable works of our author, as:

A CONCERTO for French Horns and Side Drum, with the March in JUDAS MACCHABÆUS.

Ditto for Trumpets and Horns.

Three CONCERTOS in Alexander's Feast.

ORATORIO *della Passione*.

Ditto *Della Resurrezione*.

TE DEUM, composed on the Arrival of Queen Caroline.

Ditto in Bb for the Duke of Chandos.

Ditto in A, major 3^d.

DANCES in *Ariadne*, *Ariodante*, and *Pastor Fido*.

Several Harpsichord Lessons, not printed, some of them for the Princess Louisa.

Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, besides the printed OPERAS, ORATORIOS, and TE DEUMS, of HANDEL, is in possession of the following Manuscript Scores: TE DEUM in A, and the ANTHEM, *Let God arise*, both transposed and altered, for the King's Chapel.

I will magnify thee, compiled and altered, from several Anthems, for the Sons of the Clergy at St. Paul's.

As

As pants the hart, for five voices; with several alterations and additions, by HANDEL himself, when it was introduced in the Oratorio of ESTHER.

The king shall rejoice. Performed at the Chapel-Royal, on the victory obtained at Dettingen.

Sing unto God. Performed at the nuptials of their late Royal Highnesses, the prince and princess of Wales, 1736.

Blessed are they: partly composed, and partly compiled, for the Foundling Hospital.

Let God arise.
As pants the hart. } Adapted to voices without instruments for the Chapel Royal.

ODE, or SERENATA, composed for the birthday of queen Anne.

And in the Collection of the late Barnard Granville, of Calwich, in Staffordshire, Esq. among 38 MS. folio volumes of HANDEL'S works in Score, consisting of sixteen OPERAS, eleven ORATORIOS, 4 vols. of ANTHEMS, 1 of CANTATAS, others of TE DEUMS, CONCERTOS, and Miscellaneous Pieces, there are Scores of the Operas of RINALDO, TESEO, AMADIGE, and AMMETO, with a volume of Duets, and one of Single Songs in Eight Parts.

HIS MAJESTY, and the Directors of the CONCERT OF ANCIENT MUSIC, as well as many other admirers of the productions of HANDEL, having expressed a wish that a uniform and complete edition of all his various works, vocal and instrumental, might be engraved, in score; I shall give a place here to the following Proposals, which were published last year, and which every professor, as well as judge and lover of Music, must sincerely wish may be carried into execution, not only for the advancement of the art, but for the honour of this great Musician, and of our Country.

June 22, 1783.

H A N D E L ' S M U S I C .

P R O P O S A L S

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A D D E N D A
 TO THE
 P R E F A C E
 OF THE
 C O M M E M O R A T I O N A C C O U N T.

Page xi.

SINCE the Preface was printed, in which mention is made of the principal Musical Performances of uncommon magnitude in other parts of Europe, anterior to the late Commemoration, I have been informed, that soon after my tour to Vienna, in 1772, a great Musical Institution had been established in that city for the Support of the Widows of deceased Musicians, somewhat resembling our Musical Fund. As this establishment has lately been mentioned in an anonymous book of Letters on the German Nation, written in the language of that country (*a*), and is said to have been productive of very extraordinary Musical Exhibitions, both with respect to the number of performers and accuracy of execution; in order to obtain as authentic an account of them as possible, I did myself the honour of waiting upon his Excellency Count Kagenneck, the Imperial Envoy extraordinary and Minister plenipotentiary at our court, by whom, after a full explanation of the subject of my enquiries, I was desired to write down my questions, with a promise that they should be accurately answered by the Count's secretary, M. Schild, who is not only a

(*a*) Briefe eines Reisenden Franzosen über Deutschland an Seinen Bruder zu Paris. 2 vols. 8vo. 1783.

native

native of Vienna, but a good Composer, and practical Musician.

At the time I presented this gentleman with my queries, in writing, I had likewise the advantage of conversing with him on the subject of Musical Establishments at Vienna; and was soon after favoured with ample answers to my questions; of which the following is the substance (a).

“ That the Performances for the Benefit of Musicians Widows at Vienna have been established about twelve years.

“ That they consist of a kind of *Concert Spirituel*, or *Oratorio*, executed in the great national theatre twice a year: in Advent and Lent, by about three hundred and seventy vocal and instrumental performers; and if there is an overflow of company, which sometimes happens, the performance at each of these seasons is repeated. The compositions chosen on these occasions are not always the same; but Oratorios by Haffé, Gluck, Haydn, Ditters, Starzer, Salieri, and others; and sometimes by ancient German masters: as HANDEL, Bach, Graun, and Rolle.

“ And that the sum raised at these performances annually amounts to about £500. each time.”

On St. Cecilia's-Day, there is likewise a grand Musical Performance at St. Stephen's Cathedral, the Metropolitan Church, at which, besides the performers on the Choir establishment, all the most eminent foreigners, as well as natives in Vienna at the time, are ambitious to assist. The great Mass, or Choral Music, is usually of the composition of the present Maestro di Capella, Hoffmann, or of Reuter, Caldara, or Fuchs.

(a) The questions were written in French, and answered in that language.

66 ADDENDA TO THE PREFACE.

This performance, as well as that of the Vespers, on the eve of St. Cecilia, is less remarkable for the number of hands and voices, which amount only to about a hundred, than for the excellence of the composition and talents of the several Musicians who exert themselves on the occasion ; and who, between the different parts of the service, perform Concertos, with solo parts, to display their powers on their several instruments (a).

(a) Further particulars of these Musical Establishments will be given in the last volume of *the General History of Music*, by the author of this account.

ADDENDA

ADDENDA TO LIFE OF HANDEL.

(Page 10, after the 3d Period.)

IN the year 1718, when there seem to have been no Operas in England, Nicolini having quitted this country, was engaged at Naples, where HANDEL'S RINALDO was brought on the stage, under the direction of the celebrated Leo, then a young man.

P. 16, after Note (a).

Mattheson, in his book called the *Triumphal Arch*, mentions a circumstance concerning HANDEL, which is but little known in England. He says, that "in 1717, he was at Hanover with his Royal and Electoral Highness, afterwards king George the Second, to whom he had been just appointed maestro di capella." And as no Operas or other compositions appear in the list of his works, between the Opera of *Amadige*, 1715, and *Radamisto*, 1720, his attendance at the court of Hanover will help to fill up that chasm. Mattheson, who seems to have kept an exact record of the chief musical transactions of his time, particularly those which concern his intercourse with HANDEL, tells us, that he received letters from him that were written at Hanover, in 1717, concerning his dedicating to him, and other great masters, a work of his own, called the *Orchestra*, Part II. and in 1719, other letters from London, on the same subject.

Mattheson, in his *Chren Psforte*, p. 96, speaks likewise of an Opera, set by HANDEL called *Oria-*

na, and performed at Hamburgh, 1717; and of *Judith*, an Oratorio, 1732, of which nothing is known in England. He likewise mentions, in the same work, a Composition for *Passion-Week*, of which the words were written by Brockes of Hamburgh. He says it was composed by HANDEL in England, 1719, and sent to that city, by post, in a very small score; but gives it no other name than a *Passione*.

Tradition has preserved so many anecdotes concerning the performance of HANDEL at Hamburgh, that many musical people there, who came into the world too late to hear him, think they have lived in vain, and his works have at all times been in the highest favour in that city, where he began his career; for, besides the Operas already mentioned, which he composed expressly for the theatre in Hamburgh, at the beginning of this century, before he visited Italy, his *Rinaldo*, was performed there in 1715; *Oriana*, 1717; *Agrippina*, 1718; *Zenobia*, 1721; *Mutius Scævola*, and *Floridantes*, 1723; *Tamerlano*, *Giulio Cesare*, and *Ottone*, 1725; *Ricardo Primo*, 1729; *Ammeto*, 1730; *Cleofida*, or *Porro*, and *Judith*, an Oratorio, 1732; and, lastly, *Rodelinda*, 1734, were all sent to Hamburgh, from other places, and performed there in the absence of the composer.

Though some of his later Operas were performed on that stage, in Italian, yet the four first were set and sung in the German language; and others, after being performed in Italian, in London, were translated, altered, and totally changed for the Hamburgh stage, according to circumstances. Upon the whole, it appears, that nineteen or twenty of his Dramatic works had been performed there before the year 1740, when the *Triumphal Arch* was published.

While

While Mattheson was collecting materials for this work, he applied to HANDEL himself for an account of his Life and productions, which he promised to furnish; but, says Mattheson, "I am sorry to say that it remains still to be done."

In 1745, *Le Secrétaire des Commandemens de sa Majesté Britannique*, as Mattheson sometimes styles himself, dedicated to HANDEL what he calls the *well-sounding finger language* (*Die wol-klingende finger-sprache*) by which he means a book of 12 fugues for the organ, on two and three subjects; and received from him the following letter.

Monsieur, à Londres, ce 29 de Juillet, 1735.

IL y a quelque tems, que j'ai reçue une de vos obligeantes lettres; mais à présent je viens de recevoir votre dernière, avec votre ouvrage.

Je vous en remercie, Monsieur, et je vous assure que j'ai toute l'estime pour votre mérite: je souhaiterois seulement, que mes circonstances m'étoient plus favorables, pour vous donner des marques de mon inclination pour vous servir. L'ouvrage est digne de l'attention des connoisseurs, & quant à moi, je vous rend justice.

Au reste, pour ramasser quelque époque, il m'est impossible, puisqu'une continuelle application au service de cette cour & noblesse me détourne de toute autre affaire.

Je suis avec une considération très parfaite, &c.

S I R, London, July 29, 1735.

IT is a considerable time since I received your first obliging letter; and now I am favoured with a second, accompanied by your work.

I thank you for it, Sir; and assure you that I have a sincere esteem for your merit: I only wish that I was in more favourable circumstances for manifesting my inclination to serve you. The work
is

is well worthy the attention of the curious; and for my own part, I am always ready to do you justice.

As for drawing up memoirs concerning myself, I find it utterly impossible, on account of my being continually occupied in the service of the court and nobility, which puts it out of my power to think of any thing else.

I am with perfect regard, &c.

“ Since which time, says Mattheson, till 1739,
 “ when the court and first nobility, and, indeed,
 “ the whole nation, were more attentive to a
 “ ruinous war, than to places of public entertain-
 “ ment, this could be no excuse. I therefore
 “ repeated my request, enforced by all the argu-
 “ ments I could devise, but still to no purpose.”

In speaking of HANDEL's works at this time (1740), Mattheson says, “ he composed from his
 “ own knowledge and resources;” and speaks of several Anthems and choral compositions, particularly of his *Grand Te Deum*, not knowing that it was already printed. “ His 8 *Pieces de Clave-*
 “ *cin*, says he, were engraved on copper in 1720,
 “ and since that, a second set, which are very
 “ fine; but to acquire the possession of these and
 “ his other great works, I have been prevented by
 “ their high price. However, I seem, continues
 “ he, to have had some claims upon a man to
 “ whom, in his feeble beginnings, I manifested
 “ much kindness, and afterwards shewed him
 “ great respect in the eulogiums I bestowed on
 “ him in my writings, as well as in dedicating
 “ my works to him, at no inconsiderable expence.
 “ And if he had thought *me* unworthy of such con-
 “ fidence, the musical public, at least, who
 “ adored him, merited such a mark of respect.
 “ We were early companions at the Opera, in
 “ our studies and performance, at the table, and
 “ in

“ in our rambles. *We took sweet counsel together,
“ and walked in the house of God as friends.”*

Mattheson seems to have been very imperfectly acquainted with the musical transactions of England at this time, as well as of the situation of poor HANDEL's affairs; who, opposed, persecuted, impoverished, and, by extreme agitation and anxiety, injured both in health and intellects, was so far from being able to patronize his old acquaintance and competitor, that he stood in great need of patronage himself; and indeed, he was, perhaps, still less able to undertake a retrospect scrutiny and examination of his own life and circumstances; for, being naturally proud, and neither ignorant of his own powers, nor insensible to dignity of character, this was by no means a favourable time for self-examination. It is chiefly in moments of prosperity, happiness, or vanity, that men can have much pleasure in thinking or talking about themselves; and as HANDEL was unfortunate, unhappy, and “ too proud to be
“ vain,” a request that he would become his own biographer was not likely to be granted.

Mattheson, on the contrary, was so far from having a repugnance to such a humiliating employment, that he not only furnished all the articles concerning himself that were printed in Walther, Marpurg, and other cotemporary musical writers, but was continually blazoning his abilities and importance in his own works. The truth is, that his authority for the praise he bestows on others is never suspected, as it is given unwillingly; so that he still continues to be cited by his countrymen as an author of knowledge and veracity. And his translation and critical remarks on the Life of HANDEL are still referred to, as classical.

However,

However, Mattheson, though he found himself the dupe of unreasonable expectation, concludes his account of him in his *Triumphal Arch*, by telling his countrymen that HANDEL had been offered a Doctor's degree in Music at the university of Oxford, which he had declined; but that a marble statue had been erected to him in Vauxhall Gardens, an honour seldom conferred on living artists in modern times; and concludes by saying, that "no one can praise our famous HANDEL more than I myself have done, in my musical writings; particularly in my *Musica Critica*, 1722; *Musical Patriot*, 1728; *Kernel of Melodious Science*, 1737; and *Perfect Chapel-Master*, 1739." Indeed, there are no musical writers in the German language whose works have come to my hands, that do not mention HANDEL with great reverence.

Waltther, in his *Musical Lexicon*, 1732, styles him "a very celebrated maestro di capella, then in England;" and gives a list of his Operas which had been performed at Hamburgh.

Quantz, the late celebrated master to the king of Prussia on the German flute, in his own *Life*, written by himself, speaking of the state of Music in England when he was there, 1727, says, that the greatest performer then on the harpsichord and organ in London, was HANDEL; on the violin, Geminiani; on the hautbois, Martini; and on the flute, Weideman. HANDEL's orchestra at the Opera, he says, was uncommonly powerful; and the bases in his compositions were superior to the trebles in those of Bononcini.

Scheiben, in his *Critical Musician*, published at Leipzig, 1745, says, that though Kuhnau and Keiser were very great musicians, they were obliged to give way to HANDEL and Telemann. HANDEL, though he often worked upon his own materials,
yet

yet disdained not to use the thoughts of others; particularly those of Reinhard Keiser. And in all his works he discovered great intelligence in his art, and the utmost purity of harmony, and simplicity of melody.

Marpurg, in his Treatise on the Art of Fugue, 1756, calls him a classical Composer, no less renowned for his Church-Music, full of admirable fugues, than for his theatrical productions, beautiful overtures, organ fugues, harpsichord lessons, and a most sublime manner of playing the organ. This author, in his Critical Letters on Music, Berlin, 1760, speaks of the fugue in the second Overture of *Admetus*, as a composition that he can never hear without emotion. Indeed, HANDEL has manifested wonderful abilities in that fugue, by inverting a very curious and difficult subject, in all the answers.

Hiller, of Leipzig, in his *Weekly Musical Journal*, 1767, where he gives a list of HANDEL's Operas performed in England, speaks of his genius and abilities with feeling and intelligence; and an idea may be formed of the veneration in which he is still held at Hamburgh, by the following particulars.

M. Schuback, syndic of Hamburgh, a respectable magistrate and able musician, has employed, according to his own account, all his leisure hours, during almost forty years, in the study and imitation of his great countryman, HANDEL (a).
And

(a) In 1779, I was honoured with a letter from M. Schuback, in which is inserted the following eulogy of our favourite composer: *Vous trouverez à ce que j'espère, que je suis imitateur, foible à la vérité, mais zélé pourtant, du fameux HANDEL. Ce grand homme me paroît toujours le premier compositeur qui fut jamais, et il y a près de 40 ans que je tâche de suivre ses traces; ce que je scaurois prouver par une quantité d'ouvrages, trop grandes, je le confesse,*

And this ingenious *Amateur* has composed, and published an Oratorio, called *The Disciples at Emmau*, professedly in the style of HANDEL (a).

seffe, pour un homme qui étant employé aux services de l'état, n'a qu'à dérober quelques heures, pour satisfaire à l'envie dont il est chatouillé de primer sur les maîtres de chapelle.—In another letter M. Schuback tells me, that in 1777, HANDEL's *Te Deum*, *Messia*, and *Alexander's Feast*, were performed at Hamburgh, under his direction, for the benefit of the poor.

(a) This Oratorio may be had, in score, with German or English words, of Mr. Napier, at his Music-shop, in the Strand, No. 474. It was wholly composed for tenor and base voices, on account of an irreconcilable quarrel, for precedence, which happened among the female singers at Hamburgh, 1778.



COMMEMORATION

OF

H A N D E L.



INTRODUCTION.

HOW this great idea was generated, cherished, and matured, will, probably, be a matter of curiosity to the public, as well as the manner in which it was executed. And having had the honour of attending many of the meetings of the Directors and Conductor, while the necessary arrangements were under consideration, as well as opportunities of conversing with them, since, I shall state the principal facts as accurately as possible, from such authentic information as these favourable circumstances have furnished.

In a conversation between lord viscount Fitzwilliam, sir Watkin Williams Wynn, and Joah Bates, esquire, commissioner of the Victualling-office, the beginning of last year, 1783, at the house of the latter, after remarking that the number of eminent musical performers of all kinds, both vocal and instrumental, with which London abounded, was far greater than in any other city of Europe, it was lamented that there was no public periodical occasion for collecting and consolidating them into one band; by which means a performance might be exhibited on so grand and magnificent a scale as no other part of the world could equal. The birth and death of HANDEL naturally occurred to three such enthusiastic admirers of that great master, and it was immediately recollected, that the next (now the present) year, would be a proper time for the introduction of such a custom: as it formed a *complete century* since his birth, and an exact *quarter of a century* since his decease.

The

The plan was soon after communicated to the governors of the Musical Fund, who approved it, and promised their assistance. It was next submitted to the directors of the concert of Ancient Music, who, with an alacrity which does honour to their zeal for the memory of the great artist HANDEL, voluntarily undertook the trouble of managing and directing the celebrity. At length, the design coming to the knowledge of the king, it was honoured with his Majesty's sanction and patronage. Westminster-Abbey, where the bones of the great Musician were deposited, was thought the properest place for the performance; and application having been made to the bishop of Rochester for the use of it, his lordship, finding that the scheme was honoured with the patronage of his majesty, readily consented; only requesting, as the performance would interfere with the annual benefit for the Westminster Infirmary, that part of the profits might be appropriated to that charity, as an indemnification for the loss it would sustain. To this the projectors of the plan acceded; and it was afterwards settled, that the profits of the first day's performance should be equally divided between the Musical Fund and the Westminster Infirmary; and those of the subsequent days be *solely* applied to the use of that fund which HANDEL himself so long helped to sustain, and to which he not only bequeathed a thousand pounds, but which almost every Musician in the capital annually contributes his money, his performance, or both, to support.

Application was next made to Mr. James Wyatt, the architect, to furnish plans for the necessary decorations of the abbey; drawings of which having been shewn to his Majesty, were approved. The general idea was to produce the effect of a royal musical chapel, with the orchestra terminating one end,
and

and the accommodations for the Royal Family, the other.

The arrangement of the performance of each day was next settled, and I have authority to say, that it was at his majesty's instigation that the celebrity was extended to three days instead of two, which he thought would not be sufficient for the display of HANDEL's powers, or fulfilling the charitable purposes to which it was intended to devote the profits. It was originally intended to have celebrated this grand Musical Festival on the 20th, 22d, and 23d of April; and the 20th being the day of the funeral of HANDEL, part of the Music was, in some measure, so selected as to apply to that incident. But, in consequence of the sudden dissolution of parliament, it was thought proper to defer the festival to the 26th, 27th, and 29th of May, which seems to have been for its advantage: as many persons of tender constitutions, who ventured to go to Westminster-Abbey in warm weather, would not have had the courage to go thither in cold.

Impressed with a reverence for the memory of HANDEL, no sooner was the project known, but most of the practical Musicians in the kingdom eagerly manifested their zeal for the enterprise; and many of the most eminent professors, waving all claims to precedence in the band, offered to perform in any subordinate station, in which their talents could be most useful.

By the latter end of February the plan and necessary arrangements were so far digested and advanced, that the Directors ventured to insert in all the Newspapers, the following advertisement.

“ Under

“ Under the Patronage of His MAJESTY.

In Commemoration of **HANDEL**, who was buried in Westminster-Abbey, on the 21st of April, 1759.

On **WEDNESDAY** the 21st of April next, will be performed in Westminster-Abbey, under the management of the

Earl of Exeter	Lord Paget
Earl of Sandwich	Right Hon. H. Morrice
Viscount Dudley Ward	Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Bart.
Viscount Fitzwilliam	Sir Richard Jebb, Bart.

Directors of the Concert of Ancient Music ;

Some of the most approved pieces of Sacred Music, of that great Composer.—The doors will be opened at Nine o’Clock, and the performance will begin precisely at Twelve.

And on the Evening of the same day, will be performed, at the Pantheon, a Grand Miscellaneous **CONCERT** of Vocal and Instrumental Music ; consisting entirely of pieces selected from the works of Handel.—The doors will be opened at Six o’Clock, and the Concert will begin exactly at Eight.

And on Saturday Morning, April 24th, will be performed, in Westminster Abbey, the Sacred Oratorio of the **MESSIAH**.

Such is the reverence for this illustrious Master, that most of the performers in London, and a great many from different parts of the kingdom, have generously offered their assistance ; and the Orchestra will consist of at least Four Hundred Performers, a more numerous Band than was ever known to be collected in any country, or on any occasion whatever. The profits arising from the performances, will be applied to charitable purposes.

The Directors of the Concert of Ancient Music have opened books to receive the names of such persons as are desirous of encouraging this undertaking, and will deliver out the Tickets for the several performances, at **ONE GUINEA** each. Books will likewise be opened, and Tickets delivered at Mr. Lee’s, No. 44, Wigmore-street ; Birchell’s Music-shop, No. 129, New Bond-street ; Longman and Broderip’s, in the Haymarket and Cheapside ; Bremner’s, near the new Church in the Strand ; and at Wright’s and Co. Catherine-street, Strand.

No person will be admitted without a ticket ; and it is hoped, that those who mean to subscribe, will do it as early as they conveniently can, that proper seats may be provided for them.”

In

In order to render the band as powerful and complete as possible, it was determined to employ every species of instrument that was capable of producing grand effects in a great orchestra, and spacious building. Among these, the SACBUT, or DOUBLE TRUMPET, was sought; but so many years had elapsed since it had been used in this kingdom, that neither the instrument, nor a performer upon it, could easily be found. It was, however, discovered, after much useless enquiry, not only here, but by letter, on the continent, that in his Majesty's military band there were six musicians who played the three several species of sacbut; tenor, base, and double base (*a*). The names of these performers will be found in the general list of the band.

The DOUBLE BASSOON, which was so conspicuous in the Orchestra and powerful in its effect, is likewise a tube of sixteen feet. It was made with the approbation of Mr. HANDEL, by Stainsby, the Flute-maker, for the coronation of his late majesty, George the Second. The late ingenious Mr. Lampe, author of the justly admired music of *the Dragon of Wantley*, was the person intended to perform on it; but, for want of a proper reed, or for some other cause, at present unknown, no use was made of it, at that time; nor, indeed, though it has been often attempted, was it ever introduced into any band in England, till now, by the ingenuity and perseverance of Mr. Ashley, of the Guards.

THE DOUBLE-BASE KETTLE DRUMS were made from models of Mr. Asbridge, of Drury-

(*a*) The most common sacbut, which the Italians call *trombone*, and the Germans *Posaune*, is an octave below the common trumpet; its length eight feet, when folded, and sixteen, strait. There is a manual, by which a note can be acquired a fourth lower than the usual lowest sound on the trumpet, and all the tones and semitones of the common scale.

lane orchestra, in copper, it being impossible to procure plates of brass, large enough. The Tower-drums, which by permission of his grace the duke of Richmond, were brought to the Abbey on this occasion, are those which belong to the Ordnance stores, and were taken by the duke of Marlborough at the battle of Malplaquet, in 1709. These are hemispherical, or a circle divided; but those of Mr. Asbridge are more cylindrical, being much longer, as well as more capacious, than the common kettle-drum; by which he accounts for the superiority of their tone to that of all other drums. These three species of kettle-drums, which may be called tenor, base, and double-base, were an octave below each other.

The excellent ORGAN, erected at the west end of the Abbey, for the commemoration performances only, is the workmanship of the ingenious Mr. Samuel Green, of Islington. It was fabricated for the cathedral of Canterbury, but before its departure for the place of its destination, it was permitted to be opened in the capital on this memorable occasion. The keys of communication with the harpsichord, at which Mr. Bates, the conductor, was seated, extended nineteen feet from the body of the organ, and twenty feet seven inches below the perpendicular of the set of keys by which it is usually played. Similar keys were first contrived in this country for HANDEL himself, at his Oratorios; but to convey them to so great a distance from the instrument, without rendering the touch impracticably heavy, required uncommon ingenuity and mechanical resources.

In celebrating the disposition, discipline, and effects, of this most numerous and excellent band, the merit of the admirable architect who furnished the elegant designs for the Orchestra and Galleries, must not be forgotten; as, when filled, they

they constituted one of the grandest and most magnificent spectacles which imagination can delineate. I am acquainted with few buildings, that have been constructed from plans of Mr. Wyatt, in which he exercised his genius in *Gothic*; but all the preparations for receiving their Majesties, and the first personages in the kingdom, at the east end; upwards of Five Hundred Musicians at the west; and the public in general, to the number of between three and four thousand persons, in the area and galleries, so wonderfully corresponded with the style of architecture of this venerable and beautiful structure, that there was nothing visible, either for use or ornament, which did not harmonize with the principal tone of the building, and which may not, metaphorically, have been said to be in *perfect tune* with it. But, besides the wonderful manner in which this construction exhibited the band to the spectators, the Orchestra was so judiciously contrived, that almost every performer, both vocal and instrumental, was in full view of the conductor and leader; which accounts, in some measure, for the uncommon ease with which the performers confess they executed their parts.

The whole preparations for these grand performances were comprised within the western part of the building, or broad aisle; and some excellent judges declared, that, apart from their beauty, they never had seen so wonderful a piece of carpentry, as the Orchestra and Galleries, after Mr. Wyatt's models. Indeed, the goodness of the workmanship was demonstrated by the whole four days of commemoration in the Abbey being exempted from every species of accident, notwithstanding the great crouds, and conflicts for places, which each performance produced.

At the east end of the aisle, just before the back of the choir-organ, some of the pipes of which were visible below, a throne was erected in a beautiful Gothic style, corresponding with that of the Abbey, and a center box, richly decorated and furnished with crimson satin, fringed with gold, for the reception of their Majesties and the Royal Family; on the right hand of which was a box for the Bishops, and, on the left, one for the Dean and Chapter of Westminster; immediately below these two boxes were two others, one, on the right, for the families and friends of the Directors, and the other for those of the prebendaries of Westminster. Immediately below the King's box was placed one for the Directors themselves; who were all distinguished by white wands tipped with gold, and gold medals, struck on the occasion, appending from white ribbands. These their Majesties likewise condescended to wear, at each performance. Behind, and on each side of the throne, there were seats for their Majesty's suite, maids of honour, grooms of the bed-chamber, pages, &c.

The Orchestra was built at the opposite extremity, ascending regularly from the height of seven feet from the floor, to upwards of forty, from the base of the pillars; and extending from the centre to the top of the side aisle.

The intermediate space below was filled up with level benches, and appropriated to the early subscribers. The side aisles were formed into long galleries, ranging with the Orchestra, and ascending, so as to contain twelve rows on each side: the fronts of which projected before the pillars, and were ornamented with festoons of crimson morine.

At the top of the Orchestra was placed the occasional organ, in a Gothic frame, mounting to, and mingling

mingling with, the saints and martyrs represented in the painted glass on the west window. On each side of the organ, close to the window, were placed the kettle-drums, described above. The choral bands were principally placed in view of Mr. Bates, on steps, seemingly ascending into the clouds, in each of the side aisles, as their termination was invisible to the audience. The principal singers were ranged in the front of the Orchestra, as at Oratorios, accompanied by the choirs of St. Paul, the Abbey, Windsor, and the Chapel Royal.

The design of appointing *Subdirectors*, was to diminish, as much as possible, the trouble of the noblemen and gentlemen who had projected the undertaking, as well as that of the Conductor: and this was effected with great diligence and zeal, not only in superintending the business at the doors of admission, and conducting the company to their seats, which fell to the share of Dr. Cook, Dr. Ayrton, and messieurs Jones, Aylward, and Parsons, all professors of the first class; but in arranging the performers, and conveying signals to the several parts of that wide-extended Orchestra: departments which fell to the lot of Dr. Arnold and Mr. Dupuis, organists and composers to his Majesty, and Mr. Redmond Simpson, eminent and respectable professors, of great experience, who may be said to have acted as *Adjutant-Generals* on the occasion; Dr. Arnold and Mr. Dupuis having been placed, on different sides of the Orchestra, over the vocal choir, and Mr. Simpson in the centre, over the subordinate instrumental performers. In selecting these delegates among the members of the Musical Society, great care was taken not to enfeeble the Orchestra, by employing such performers as were likely to augment its force; but such as had either

ther ceased to play in public, or whose instruments being the organ and harpsichord, of which only one was wanted, accepted of parts which were not the less useful for being *silently* performed.

Of the care and intelligence with which preparations were made for these performances, some judgment may be formed from the single circumstance of the Music-books that were provided for each day: as two hundred and seventy-four were requisite for the first performance, in the Abbey; a hundred and thirty-eight for the Pantheon; and two hundred and sixty-seven for the Messiah; amounting, in all, to seven hundred and seventy-nine; not one of which was missing, or mislaid, nor was an instrument wanting during the whole commemoration: as the porters had strict orders to convey all the instruments into the orchestra, at the Abbey, by seven o'clock in the morning of each day, to prevent the company from being incommoded by the admission of such as were unwieldy.

Few circumstances will, perhaps, more astonish veteran Musicians, than to be informed, that there was but *one general Rehearsal* for each day's performance: an indisputable proof of the high state of cultivation to which practical Music is at present arrived in this country; for, if good performers had not been found, ready made, a *dozen* rehearsals would not have been sufficient to make them so. Indeed, Mr. Bates, in examining the list of performers, and enquiring into their several merits, suggested the idea of what he called a *drilling Rehearsal*, at Tottenham-street Concert-Room, a week before the performance; in order to hear such volunteers, particularly chorus-singers, as were but little known to himself, or of whose abilities his assistant

ant was unable to speak with certainty (a). At this rehearsal, though it consisted of a hundred and twenty performers, not more than two of that number were desired to attend no more.

At the general rehearsal in the Abbey, mentioned above, more than five hundred persons found means to obtain admission, in spite of every endeavour to shut out all but the performers; for fear of interruption, and, perhaps, of failure in the first attempts at incorporating and consolidating such a numerous band: consisting, not only of all the regulars, both native and foreign, which the capital could furnish, but all the irregulars, that is, *dilettanti*, and provincial Musicians of character, who could be mustered, many of whom had never heard or seen each other before. This intrusion, which was very much to the dissatisfaction of the Managers and Conductor, suggested the idea of turning the eagerness of the public to some profitable account for the charity, by fixing the price of admission to Half a Guinea for each person.

But, besides the profits derived from subsequent rehearsals, the consequences of the first were not without their use: for the pleasure and astonishment of the audience, at the small mistakes, and great effects of this first experiment, which many had condemned by anticipation, were soon communicated to the lovers of Music, throughout the town, to the great increase of subscribers and solicitors for tickets. For though the friends of the Directors were early in subscribing, perhaps, from personal respect, as much

(a) This was Mr. John Ashley, of the Guards, whose unwearied zeal and diligence were constantly employed with such intelligence and success, as greatly facilitated the advancement of the plan, and diminished the anxiety of Mr. Bates, as well as the weight with which he had voluntarily loaded his shoulders.

as expectation of a higher musical repast than usual ; yet, the public, in general, did not manifest great eagerness in securing tickets, till after this rehearsal, Friday, May 21, which was reported to have astonished even the performers themselves, by its correctness and effects. But so interesting did the undertaking become, by this favourable rumour, that from the great demand of tickets, it was found necessary to close the subscription ; which was done so rigorously, that the author of this account was unable, on Monday, to obtain of the Managers tickets of any kind, on any terms, for some of his friends, who had neglected to give in their names sooner.

Many families, as well as individuals, were, however, attracted to the capital by this celebrity ; and I never remember it so full, not only so late in the year, but at any time in my life, except at the coronation of his present Majesty. Many of the performers came, unsolicited, from the remotest parts of the kingdom, at their own expence ; some of them, however, were afterwards reimbursed, and had a small gratuity in consideration of the time they were kept from their families, by the two unexpected additional performances.

Foreigners, particularly the French, must be much astonished at so numerous a band moving in such exact measure, without the assistance of a *Coryphæus* to beat the time, either with a roll of paper, or a noisy *baton*, or truncheon. Rousseau says, that “ the more time is beaten, the less “ it is kept ;” and, it is certain, that when the measure is broken, the fury of the musical-general, or director, increasing with the disobedience and confusion of his troops, he becomes more violent, and his strokes and gesticulations more ridiculous, in proportion to their disorder.

The

The celebrated Lulli, whose favour in France, during the last century, was equal to that of **HANDEL** in England, during the present, may be said to have *beat himself to death*, by intemperate passion in marking the measure to an ill-disciplined band; for in regulating, with his cane, the time of a *Te Deum*, which he had composed for the recovery of his royal patron, Louis XIV. from a dangerous sickness, in 1686, he wounded his foot by accidentally striking on that instead of the floor, in so violent a manner, that, from the contusion occasioned by the blow, a mortification ensued, which cost him his life, at the age of fifty-four!

As this Commemoration is not only the first instance of a band of such magnitude being assembled together, but of *any* band, at all numerous, performing in a similar situation, without the assistance of a *Manu-ductor*, to regulate the measure, the performances in Westminster-Abbey may be safely pronounced, no less remarkable for the multiplicity of voices and instruments employed, than for accuracy and precision. When all the wheels of that huge machine, the Orchestra, were in motion, the effect resembled clock-work in every thing, but want of feeling and expression.

And, as the power of gravity and attraction in bodies is proportioned to their mass and density, so it seems as if the magnitude of this band had commanded and impelled adhesion and obedience, beyond that of any other of inferior force. The pulsations in every limb, and ramifications of veins and arteries in an animal, could not be more reciprocal, isochronous, and under the regulation of the heart, than the members of this body of Musicians under that of the Conductor and Leader. The totality of sound seemed to proceed from one voice, and one instrument;
and

and its powers produced, not only new and exquisite sensations in judges and lovers of the art, but were felt by those who never received pleasure from Music before.

These effects, which will be long remembered by the present public, perhaps to the disadvantage of all other choral performances, run the risk of being doubted by all but those who heard them, and the present description of being pronounced fabulous, if it should survive the present generation.

UNDER

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF
HIS MAJESTY.

DIRECTORS.

Earl of EXETER,

Earl of SANDWICH,

Earl of UXBRIDGE,

Sir WATKIN WILLIAMS WYNN, Bart.

Sir RICHARD JEBB, Bart.

CONDUCTOR.

JOAH BATES, Esquire.

ASSISTANT DIRECTORS.

Dr. Benjamin Cooke,
Dr. Samuel Arnold,
Dr. Edmund Ayrton,
Mr. Redmond Simpson,

Mr. Thomas Saunders Dupuis,
Mr. John Jones,
Mr. Theodore Aylward,
Mr. William Parsons.

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR,

Mr. John Ashley.

INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMERS.

O R G A N.

JOAH BATES, Esquire.

FIRST VIOLINS.

PRINCIPALS.

Mr. Hay
Mr. Cramer

Rev. Mr. Attwood
Mr. Agus
Mr. Barret
Mr. Barron
Mr. Baffet
Mr. Bishop
Mr. Blake
Mr. Boulflower
Mr. Brooks
Mr. Cabanes
Mr. Chabran
Mr. Cole
Mr. Condel
Mr. Coyle
Mr. Coyle, jun. Organist, Lud-
low, Shropshire
Mr. Crouch
Mr. Dance
Mr. Denby, Derby
Mr. Fifin
Mr. Fox

Mr. Frudd, Nottingham
Mr. Gillingham
Mr. Gwilliam
Mr. Hellendael
Mr. Hime
Mr. Hindmarsh
Mr. Howard
Mr. Henry
Mr. Hobbs
Mr. Huxtable
Mr. Johnstone
Mr. Lanzoni
Mr. J. Mahon, Oxford
Mr. Oliver
Mr. Parkinson
Mr. Salpietro
Mr. Robert Shaw
Mr. Anthony Shaw
Mr. G. Shutz
Mr. Thomas Smith
Mr. Thackary, York
Mr. Thurstan
Mr. Tibet
Mr. Wood
Mr. Wakefield
Mr. Watson

SECOND

INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMERS. 19

SECOND VIOLINS.

PRINCIPALS.

Mr. Borghi
Mr. Soderini

Master Ashley
Mr. Churchill
Mr. Coles
Mr. Compton
Mr. Cross
Mr. Evans
Mr. Farlow
Mr. Fell
Mr. Foulis
Mr. French
Mr. Gallot
Mr. Gehot
Mr. Guisbach
Mr. Guisbach, jun.
Mr. Hackman
Mr. Higgins
Mr. Hodson
Mr. Howlds
Mr. Jackson
Mr. Inchbald
Mr. Linton
Mr. Long
Mr. Miller
Mr. Nicholson
Mr. Norbon
Mr. J. Parkinson
Mr. Peck
Mr. Pinto
Mr. Rawlins
Mr. Reinegale
Mr. T. Shaw
Mr. J. Smith
Mr. Robert Smith
Mr. Smithergale
Mr. Stanard
Mr. Stayner
Mr. Valentine, jun.
Mr. Vidini
Mr. Wagner
Mr. D. Walker
Mr. Ware, jun.
Mr. Warren
Mr. Watley
Mr. Williams
Mr. Woodcock

TENORS.

PRINCIPALS.

Mr. Napier

Mr. Carnevale
Mr. Hackwood
Mr. Shields

Mr. Benfer
Mr. Buckinger
Rev. Mr. Flye
Mr. Gibbons
Mr. Jackson
Mr. G. Jones
Mr. W. Mahon
Mr. Messing
Mr. Miller
Mr. Pick
Mr. J. Richards
Mr. Rock
Mr. Sharp, jun. Grantham,
Lincolnshire
Mr. Sharp, St. Neott's Hun-
tingdonshire
Mr. D. Shaw
Mr. Simpson
Mr. Turner
Mr. Valentine, Leicester
Mr. Vial
Mr. Villenieu
Mr. Warren, sen.
Mr. Wilcock

HAUTBOIS.

PRINCIPALS.

Mr. Vincent
Mr. Fischer
Mr. Eiffert
Mr. Parke

Mr. Brandi
Mr. Cantelo
Mr. Foster
Mr. Kneller
Mr. Munro
Mr. Parke, jun.
Mr. Patri
Mr. F. Sharp, Grantham, Lin-
colnshire
Mr. Suck

2d HAUTBOIS.

Mr. Arnult
Mr. Coles
Mr. Cornish
Mr. Dickenson

Mr.

20 INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMERS.

Mr. Gray
Mr. Heinitz
Mr. Karift
Mr. Leffler, jun.
Mr. Lowe
Mr. Maniffire
Mr. Pope
Mr. Rice
Mr. Teed

FLUTES

Mr. Buckley
Mr. Decamp
Mr. Florio
Mr. Huttley
Mr. Papendick
Mr. Potter

VIOLINCELLOS.

PRINCIPALS.

Mr. Crofdill
Mr. Cervetto
Mr. Paxton
Mr. Mara

Mr. Adams
Mr. Barron, jun.
Mr. Beilby
Mr. Bradford
Mr. Denny
Mr. Guisbach
Mr. Hill
Mr. Mason
Mr. Mawby
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Roberts
Mr. Scola
Mr. William Sharp
Mr. John Shields
Mr. Sikes
Mr. J. Smith
Mr. Zeilder

BASSOONS.

PRINCIPALS.

Mr. Baumgarten
Mr. Hogg
Mr. Lion
Mr. Parkinson

Mr. Bodwin
Mr. Browning
Mr. Danman
Mr. Evans
Mr. Gough
Mr. Holmes
Mr. Hubbard
Mr. Jenkinson
Mr. King
Mr. Kneller
Mr. Leffler
Mr. Lings
Mr. Mallet
Mr. Osborn
Mr. Peacocke
Mr. Pondsford
Mr. Schubert
Mr. R. Shaw
Mr. Ralph Shaw
Mr. Windfor
Mr. J. Windfor
Mr. Zink

DOUBLE BASSOON.

Mr. Ashley

DOUBLE BASSES.

PRINCIPALS.

Mr. Gariboldi
Mr. Richard Sharp
Mr. Neibour
Mr. Pasquali

Mr. Barret
Mr. Dreffler
Mr. Granthony
Mr. B. Hill
Mr. J. Hill
Mr. King
Mr. Kirton
Mr. Philpot
Mr. J. Sharp
Mr. Smart
Mr. Thompson

TRUMPETS.

PRINCIPALS.

Mr. Sarjant

Mr.

INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMERS. 21

Mr. Jenkins
Mr. Vinicombe
Mr. Fitzgerald

Mr. Atwood
Mr. Cantelo
Mr. Flack
Mr. W. Jones
Mr. Marley
Mr. Nicola
Mr. Porney
Mr. Thompson

TROMBONI, or SACBUTS.

Mr. Karft
Mr. Kneller
Mr. Moeller
Mr. Neibour
Mr. Pick
Mr. Zink.

These performers played on other instruments, when the sacbuts were not wanted.

H O R N S.

Mr. English
Mr. Gray
Mr. Kaye
Mr. Leander
Mr. Lely
Mr. Lord
Mr. M'Pherson
Mr. Miller
Mr. Moeller
Mr. Ockle
Mr. Payola
Mr. Pieltin

KETTLE-DRUMS.

Mr. Burnet
Mr. Houghton
Mr. Nelson

DOUBLE KETTLE DRUM.

Mr. Ashbridge

VOCAL PERFORMERS.

TREBLES.

PRINCIPALS.

Madame Mara
Miss Harwood
Miss Cantelo
Miss Abrams
Miss T. Abrams
Signor Pacchierotti, at the Pantheon only
Signor Bartolini

Three Master Ashleys
Miss Burnet
Master Bellamy
Mrs. Burnet
Ten Chapel Boys
Master Dorion
Miss Hudson

Two Master Knyvetts

Master Latter
Master Loader
Mrs. Love
Master Lowther
Master Mathews
Miss Middleton
Miss Parke
Ten St. Paul's Boys
Master Piper
Master Taylor
Eight Westminster Boys
Six Windsor Boys

COUNTER TENORS.

PRINCIPALS.

Rev. Mr. Clerk

Mr.

22 INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMERS.

Mr. Dyne
Mr. Knyvett

Baron Dillon
Mr. W. Ayrton, Yorkshire
Mr. Barrow
Mr. Battifhall
Mr. Bowen
Mr. Bushby
Rev. Mr. Champness
Rev. Mr. Comins, Exeter
Mr. Dowding
Mr. Fawcett
Mr. Friend
Mr. Gore, Windfor
Mr. Green
Mr. Guichard
Mr. George Harris
Mr. Hartly, Windfor
Mr. Harwood, Lancashire
Mr. Hindle
Mr. Horsfall
Mr. Leach
Mr. Lewis
Mr. Livesque
Mr. Ivitt Loulworth, Cam-
bridgehire
Mr. Machin
Mr. Moulds
Mr. Offield
Mr. Parker
Mr. Pemberton
Mr. Percy
Mr. Reinholdson
Mr. Roberts
Mr. Rose
Mr. Salmon, Worcester
Mr. Slater
Mr. Smith
Mr. Starkey, Oxford
Mr. Steel
Mr. Stevenson, Huntingdon
Mr. Swaine
Mr. Swan
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Vincent
Mr. Walton, Litchfield
Rev. Mr. O. Wight
Mr. Wilfon

Mr. Norris, Oxford
Mr. Corfe, Salisbury

Mr. Abington
Mr. Arrowsmith
Mr. Atterbury, Teddington,
Middlesex
Mr. Aylmer
Mr. Ayrton, jun.
Mr. Bacon
Mr. Thomas Baker
Mr. Bethal
Mr. Billington
Mr. Bloomer
Mr. Booth
Mr. Bond
Mr. Bryan
Mr. Burlington
Mr. Busby
Mr. Cheese, Manchester
Mr. Christian
Mr. Ed. Clarke
Mr. William Clarke
Mr. Comins, Penzance, Corn-
wall
Mr. Matthew Cooke
Mr. Robert Cooke
Mr. Dale
Mr. Darvile
Mr. Darvile, jun.
Mr. Deeble
Mr. Degnum
Mr. Dorion
Mr. Evance
Mr. Evance, jun.
Mr. Field
Mr. Florio, jun.
Mr. Foulston
Mr. Gillatt
Mr. Gilson
Mr. Guise, Windfor
Mr. Heather
Mr. Hewitt
Mr. Hill, Salisbury
Mr. Hobler
Mr. Holcroft
Mr. Hudson
Mr. Jackson
Mr. Immyns
Mr. King, Stilton, Huntingdon-
shire
Mr. Keith
Mr. Latter
Mr. Lloyd

T E N O R S.

PRINCIPALS.

Mr. Harrison

Mr.

VOCAL PERFORMERS.

23

Mr. Luther
Mr. Malmes
Mr. Minchine
Mr. Noble, Peterborough
Mr. J. Ogden, near Manchester
Mr. Olive
Mr. Piercy
Mr. Pitt, Worcester
Mr. Plumer
Mr. Probyn, Birmingham
Mr. William Rocke
Mr. Randal
Mr. Reeve
Mr. Remy
Mr. M. Roch
Mr. J. Roch
Mr. Sexton, Windfor
Mr. Squire
Mr. Stafford Smith
Mr. Stanton
Mr. Stevens
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Tett
Mr. J. Tett
Mr. Turtle
Mr. Vincent, jun.
Mr. Webb, jun.
Mr. White
Mr. Whitehead
Mr. Williams
Mr. Wilfon
Mr. Woodhead

BASSES. PRINCIPALS.

Mr. Bellamy
Mr. Champness
Mr. Reinhold
Signor Tafca
Mr. Mathews, Oxford

Mr. William Baker
Mr. Balmforth
Mr. Boyce
Mr. Brewster
Mr. Briggs
Mr. Buckingham
Mr. Burton
Mr. Calcot
Mr. Clay
Mr. Crawley
Mr. Crippen
Mr. Coke

Mr. Culver
Mr. Danby
Mr. Danby, jun.
Mr. Darley
Mr. Duncomb
Mr. Fisher
Rev. Mr. Gibbons
Mr. W. Granville
Mr. Greatorox, sen. Burton up-
on Trent
Mr. Greatorox, jun. Newcastle
Mr. James Green
Mr. Thomas Green, Birming-
ham
Mr. Groombridge
Mr. Hargrave
Mr. Harris, Birmingham
Mr. Richard Harris
Mr. J. Harrifon, Derbyshire
Mr. F. Hatfield
Mr. Henshaw
Mr. Holden, Birmingham
Rev. Mr. Horner
Mr. Howard
Mr. Joyce
Mr. Langdon, Peterborough
Mr. Linton
Mr. Lockhart
Mr. Ludworth
Mr. Lynott
Rev. Dr. Morgan
Mr. Miller
Mr. Milton
Mr. Olive
Mr. Osmand
Mr. Overend, Isleworth
Mr. Pemberton
Mr. Price
Mr. Purcell
Mr. Rainbott
Mr. Rawson, Nottingham
Mr. Real
Mr. Robinson, Windfor
Mr. Robinson, Huntingdonshire
Mr. Roebuck
Mr. Rogers
Mr. Henry Rose
Mr. Rutter, Windfor
Mr. Sales, jun. Windfor
Mr. Salter
Mr. Sands
Mr. Saunders
Mr. Slater, jun.
Mr. Smart

H

Mr.

VOCAL PERFORMERS.

Mr. Smith, Richmond
Mr. John Swan
Mr. Joseph Swan
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Ben. Thomas
Mr. John Thomas
Mr. Tombs, Winchester
Mr. Tomson

Mr. Townsend
Mr. Waite
Mr. Watts
Mr. Webb
Mr. Wheatley, Greenwich
Mr. Wheatly, jun.
Rev. Mr. Willer.

COM.

C O M M E M O R A T I O N

O F

H A N D E L.

F I R S T P E R F O R M A N C E,

W E S T M I N S T E R - A B B E Y,

W E D N E S D A Y , M a y 2 6 , 1 7 8 4 .

COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDS

FIRST PERFORMANCE

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Wednesday, May 26, 1884

H. 2

[To face P. 26.]

LIST of the Compositions selected from the
Works of HANDEL,

For the first Commemoration Performance.

The CORONATION ANTHEM.

P A R T I.

OVERTURE—ESTHER.
The Dettingen TE DEUM.

P A R T II.

OVERTURE, with the DEAD MARCH in SAUL.
Part of the FUNERAL ANTHEM.

When the ear heard him.

He delivered the poor that cried.

His body is buried in Peace.

GLORIA PATRI, from the JUBILATE.

P A R T III.

ANTHEM—*O sing unto the Lord.*

CHORUS—*The Lord shall reign, from ISRAEL IN
EGYPT.*

DE T. B. A. B.

PART I.

EARLY in the morning, the weather being very favourable, persons of all ranks quitted their carriages with impatience and apprehension, lest they should not obtain seats, and presented themselves at the several doors of Westminster Abbey, which were advertised to be opened at Nine o'clock; but the door-keepers not having taken their posts, and the Orchestra not being wholly finished, or, perhaps, the rest of the Abbey quite ready for the reception of the audience, till near Ten o'clock; such a croud of ladies and gentlemen were assembled together as became very formidable and terrific to each other, particularly the female part of the expectants; for some of these being in full dress, and every instant more and more incommoded and alarmed, by the violence of those who pressed forward, in order to get near the door, screamed; others fainted; and all were dismayed and apprehensive of fatal consequences; as many of the most violent, among the gentlemen, threatened to break open the doors; a measure, which if adopted, would, probably, have cost many of the most feeble and helpless their lives; as they must, infallibly, have been thrown down, and trampled on, by the robust and impatient part of the croud.

It was a considerable time after a small door at the west end was opened, before this press abated: as tickets could not be examined, and cheques given in return, fast enough, to diminish

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nish the candidates for admission, or their impatience.

However, except dishevelled hair, and torn garments, no real mischief seems to have happened. In less than an hour after the doors were opened, the whole area and galleries of the Abbey seemed too full for the admission of more company; and a considerable time before the performance began, the doors were all shut to every one but their Majesties, and their suite, who arrived soon after Twelve; and on entering the box, prepared for their reception, pleasure and astonishment, at the sight of the company and disposition of the Orchestra and Performers, were painted so strongly in their countenances, as to be visible to all their delighted subjects present. Eagerness and expectation for the *premier coup d'archet* were now wound up to the highest pitch of impatience; when a silence, the most profound and solemn, was gently interrupted by the processional symphony of the

CORONATION ANTHEM,

Composed in 1727.

“ *Zadoc the priest, and Nathan the prophet,
“ anointed Solomon king : and all the people rejoiced ;
“ and said, God save the king : long live the king :
“ may the king live for ever. Hallelujah. Amen.*”
1 Kings i. 38.

And from the time that the first sound of this celebrated, and well-known composition, was heard, to the final close, every hearer seemed afraid of breathing, lest it should obstruct the stream of harmony in its passage to the ear.

From the progress which practical Music has made in this country, since HANDEL's time, it
might,

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might, perhaps, be safely pronounced, that this Anthem was never so well performed, under his own direction. As I heard it myself at the Coronation of his present Majesty, when a numerous band was assembled under the direction of the late Doctor Boyce, I can, at least, venture to say that, in recollection, the performance then will bear no comparison with that now, in the same place, in honour of the composer (*a*).

OVERTURE IN ESTHER,

Composed in 1720.

The first movement of this grave and majestic Overture has always astonished me, by the simplicity of its modulation; which, though almost rigorously confined to the diatonic intervals, and harmony of the key, is never monotonous in its effects. And the first bar of the melody, though so often repeated by the two violins, is so grateful and pleasing, as to be always welcome to the ear.

All the movements of this admirable Overture first appeared in HANDEL's *Trios*, as did many of those he introduced afterwards in his Organ Concertos; and he might with more truth have

(*a*) There was, doubtless, the greatest propriety in saluting their Majesties, at their entrance, with the *Coronation Anthem*; and yet, I could not help wishing, that this performance, so different from all others, had opened with some piece in which every voice and every instrument might have been heard at the same instant; as such an effect might then have been produced, as can never be obtained by gradation: the difference between *nothing* and *something* being greater, than between any two degrees of excellence. Indeed, the most sudden and *surprising* effect of this stupendous band, was, perhaps, produced by simultaneous tuning: as all the stringed-instruments performed this task, *à double corde*, and these strings being all *open*, their force was more than equal to that of two stopt-strings, upon two different instruments.

said

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said of those Trios ; *Condo et compono, quæ mox depromere possim*, than Geminiani, of his last, and worst set of Concertos.

The second movement, which has always been justly admired for the gravity and contrast between the trebles, which frequently repeat a fragment of canto fermo, and the base, had a most striking effect given to it, by the force and energy of this band. And the fugue, which is composed upon a most marked and happy subject, though seldom in more than three parts, as the tenor constantly plays an octave above the base, seemed more rich in harmony, and ingenious in contrivance, to-day, than usual. There never was, perhaps, an instrumental fugue on a more agreeable subject ; treated in a more masterly manner ; or more pleasing in its effects, than this ; which differs in several circumstances from almost all other fugues : first, in the given subject being accompanied by an airy moving base ; secondly, by the reversion of the subject, when first answered by the second violin ; and, thirdly, by the episodes, or solo parts, for the hautbois (a). This overture, almost ever since it was composed, has been so constantly played at St. Paul's, at the Feast of the Sons of the Clergy, that it now seems in a peculiar manner dedicated to the service of the Church.

THE DETTINGEN TE DEUM,

Composed in 1743.

This splendid production has been so frequently performed at St. Paul's and elsewhere, that nothing

(a) These solo parts were played by twelve hautbois, in unison ; which united in such a manner, as to have the effect of a single instrument. The short solo part for the hautbois in the slow movement, was performed, by Mr. Tho. Vincent, alone, who so long enjoyed the favour of the town upon that instrument.

could

could be added to its celerity by my feeble praise. I shall only observe, that as it was composed for a military triumph, the fourteen trumpets, two pair of common kettle-drums, two pair of double drums from the Tower, and a pair of double-bass drums, made expressly for this Commemoration, were introduced with great propriety; indeed, these last drums, except the destruction, had all the effect of the most powerful artillery.

There is some reason to suspect that HANDEL, in setting his grand *Te Deum* for the peace of Utrecht, as well as this, confined the meaning of the word *cry* to a sorrowful sense: as both the movements to the words——

“ *To thee all angels cry aloud.*”

are not only in a minor-key, but slow, and plaintive. It contrasts well, however, with the preceding and subsequent movements. Indeed, the latter glows with all the fire and vehemence of HANDEL's genius for polyphonic combinations and contrivances.

The grave and solemn praise of the *Apostles*, *Prophets*, and *Martyrs*, measured by the constant majestic motion of the base, is well symbolized.

“ *Thou sittest at the right hand of God,*” &c.

is expressed in a strain that is remarkably pleasing, and which, in spite of forty years, still retains all the bloom and freshness of novelty: and

“ *We therefore pray thee help thy servants, whom
“ thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood,*”

is admirable, in fugue, modulation, and counter-point, *à Capella*; as is the next movement, to the three verses:

“ *Make*

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“ *Make them to be numbered—*
 “ *O Lord save thy people—and*
 “ *Govern them and lift them up for ever,*”

with the additional merit of a happy verbal expression.

“ *Day by day we magnify thee,*”

is grand and well accented, though some of the trumpet passages are a little *viellis*. The art of fugue, both in that, and the next verse:

“ *And we worship thy name ever world without end,*”

is treated with HANDEL's usual clearness and felicity.

As he was sure of a great and varied band, when he composed this *Te Deum*, he has made as judicious a use of the several instruments of his Orchestra, as a painter could do of the colours on his palette: now exhibiting them in their full lustre, singly; then augmenting or diminishing their force, by light and shade, and often by combination with others, making them subservient to different purposes of expression and effect.

“ *Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without*
 “ *sin,*”

is set to an exquisite strain, in which the modulation is no less surprising, learned, and curious, than pathetic and pleasing (a).

The last movement:

“ *O Lord, in thee have I trusted—&c.*

is what the Italians would allow to be *ben tirato*.

(a) The score of this movement, as printed many years since, by Walsh, is extremely incorrect; particularly in the second violin and tenor parts of the last line, bars four and five.

Indeed,

Indeed, it is an excellent display of HANDEL's resources in discovering and availing himself of the most latent advantages which every simple as well as artificial subject affords him. The symphony of this Chorus, which is chiefly constructed upon a *ground-base*, beginning by two trumpets, that are afterwards joined by the other instruments, is stately and interesting, though in the measure of a common minuet. The long solo part, after the symphony, for a contralto voice, with soft and sparing accompaniments, renders the subsequent sudden burst of all the voices and instruments the more striking. And the latter part, in fugue, with an alternate use of the *ground-base*, seems to wind up this magnificent production by

"Untwisting all the chains that tie
"The hidden soul of harmony."

PART

P A R T II.

OVERTURE IN SAUL.

Composed in 1740.

THE first movement of this admirable composition, so different from the common style of Overture, which Lulli had established, and to which all the composers in Europe, for more than fifty years, implicitly conformed, is extremely pleasing; and when it was first heard, must have surprised, by the grace and novelty of its conduct and passages.

Though the rest of this Overture was superseded, in favour of the *Dead March*, yet it is but justice to the author to say, that the second movement, with solo parts for the principal hautbois and violin, is so *chantant*, as perpetually to remind the hearer of a vocal duet, richly accompanied. The fugue, indeed, with solo parts for the organ, was, perhaps, very judiciously omitted; as the passages have been long in such favour with the imitators of HANDEL, as to be rendered trite and vulgar. The *Minuet* will, however, always preserve its grace and dignity; being one of the few final movements of an Overture, which neither age, nor fashion, can deform.

THE DEAD MARCH IN SAUL.

This most happy and affecting movement, which has retained its favour near half a century, and which is so simple, solemn, and sorrowful, that it can never be heard, even upon a single instrument,

ment, without exciting melancholy sensations, received here all the dignity and grandeur which it could possibly derive from the various tones of the most powerful, as well as best disciplined, band, that was ever assembled.

PART OF THE ANTHEM WHICH WAS PERFORMED
IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY AT THE FUNERAL
OF HER SACRED MAJESTY QUEEN CAROLINE,
1737.

*"When the ear heard her, then it blessed her; and
when the eye saw her, it gave witness of her."*
Job xxix. 11.

This elegant, mild, and sorrowing strain, after all the riotous clangor of jubilation in the *Te Deum*, and powerful percussive of drums, and tuneful blasts of trumpets and sacbuts, in the Dead March, was soothing and comforting to the ear. Contrast is the great source of our musical pleasure; for however delightful we may be with *quick, slow, loud, or soft*, for a certain time, variety is so necessary to stimulate attention, that the performance which is in want of the one, is never sure of the other. This charming movement is still so new, that it would do honour to the taste, as well as knowledge in harmony, of any composer now living. HANDEL had a versatile genius; and, if he had continued to write for the Opera, instead of the Church, there was no elegance or refinement which Hæssle, Vinci, Pergolesi, and their successors, ever attained, that was out of his reach.

"She delivered the poor that cried, the fatherless, and him that had none to help him.—"

Job xxix. 12. Kindness, meekness, and comfort
"were in her tongue; Eccles. xxxvi. 23. If there

"was

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*" was any virtue, and if there was any praise, she
" thought on those things."* Phil. iv. 8.

The trebles singing alone, and only accompanied in unison, by treble instruments, at the words, — *" kindness, meekness, and comfort were in her tongue,"* had an admirable effect, in point of contrast, with the full harmony of the rest of this charming Chorus. Indeed, this *Nania* contains all the requisites of good Music, in plain counterpoint: as good harmony, melody, rhythm, accent, and expression (a). The beauties of this strain are of every age and country; no change of fashion can efface them, or prevent their being felt by persons of sensibility.

" Their bodies are buried in peace;" Eccles. xliv. 14.

This admirable fragment of solemn and sorrowful harmony, in the Church style, almost wholly without instruments, is an excellent introduction to the less plaintive strain which follows:

" But their name liveth evermore;" Ibid.

which is one of the most singular and agreeable Choruses I know, and was performed with an accuracy, power, and spirit, which neither that, nor, perhaps, any Music of the kind ever received

(a) There are likewise some natural and pleasing imitations in the latter part of the movement, which, however, neither destroy the accent, nor render the words unintelligible, the crimes usually laid to the charge of *Canons, Fugues, and Imitations*. But HANDEL, who felt, and so well expressed the general sentiments of the words he set to Music in our language, was never certain of their pronunciation: the word *delivered*, which is generally, by elision, made a *trissyllable*, had never, I believe, been contracted to a *disyllable*, before; but in this Chorus, though the word is very often repeated, never more than *two notes* were allowed to it.

ed

ed before (*a*). Each of the three movements from the *Funeral Anthem*, seemed to excite such lively sensations of grief, as reminded all present of the ravages which death had made among their particular families and friends, and moved many even to tears.

GLORIA PATRI. From the Jubilate, 1713.

“*Glory be to the Father,*” &c.

This Chorus, from the *Jubilate*, which HANDEL set at the same time as the grand *Te Deum*, for the peace at Utrecht, and the only *Jubilate* he ever composed, being in his grandest and most magnificent style, received every possible advantage in the performance, from a correct and powerful band, and the most mute and eager attention in the audience.

(*a*) In this, and the preceding movement, HANDEL has made a happy use of a modulation which was very frequent in the sixteenth century: the giving a common chord to the flat seventh of a major key, just before a close. The laws of *liaison*, or relation, which have been since established, have banished this modulation from secular Music; but in that of the Church, when sparingly used, it is not only allowable, but productive of fine effects.

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P A R T III.

ANTHEM. Composed about the Year 1719.

AIR AND CHORUS.

*“ O sing unto the Lord a new song; O sing unto the
Lord all the whole earth.”* Ps. xcvi. 1.

MADAME Mara's voice and manner of singing in this plain and solemn air, so admirably accompanied on the hautbois by Fisher, had a sudden effect on myself, which I never before experienced, even from her performance of more pathetic Music. I have long admired her voice, and abilities in various styles of singing; but never imagined tenderness the peculiar characteristic of her performance: however, here, though she had but a few simple notes to deliver, they made me shiver, and I found it extremely difficult to avoid bursting into tears on hearing them. Indeed, she had not only the power of conveying to the remotest corner of this immense building, the softest and most artificial inflexions of her sweet and brilliant voice, but articulated every syllable of the words with such neatness, precision, and purity, that it was rendered as audible, and intelligible, as it could possibly have been, in a small theatre, by meer declamation.

CHORUS.

*“ Declare his honour unto the Heathen, and his
wonders unto all people—For the Lord is great,
and cannot worthily be praised.”* Ps. xcvi. 3, 4.
This

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This Chorus is in a truly grand style, and produced great effects though there are only three vocal parts. The subject is reversed, at the latter end, in a most ingenious manner.

"He is more to be feared than all gods." Pf. xcvi. 3, 4.

Here the modulation is sublime, and truly ecclesiastic. The pause on Eb with a perfect chord, the instant before a close in F, carries us again to the sixteenth century (a).

"The waves of the sea rage horribly; but yet the Lord who dwells on high is mightier." Pf. xciii. 5.

HANDEL, in the accompaniments of this boisterous air, has tried, not unsuccessfully, to express the turbulence of a tempestuous sea; the style of this kind of Music is not meant to be amiable; but it contrasts well with other movements, and this has a spirit, and even roughness, peculiar to our author.

DUET.

"O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." Pf. xcvi. 9.

The solemnity of this movement may, perhaps, seem as much too languid to the admirers of the preceding air, as that may be too turbulent for the nerves of those who are partial to this. The truth is, that both verge a little on the extreme; but a composer, of such extensive powers of invention as HANDEL, dares every thing, for the sake of variety: and this Duet is much in the admired style of Steffani.

(a) Arkadelt, the most celebrated madrigalist of that period, in a favourite madrigal beginning: *Il bianco e dolce cigno cantando muore*, has the same modulation immediately preceding a close.

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CHORUS.

*"Let all the whole earth stand in awe of him.
"Ibid. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth
"be glad; let the sea make a noise and all that there-
"in is." Ibid. 11.*

In the last movement of this Chorus, when all the instruments are busied, such a commotion is raised, as constitutes one of HANDEL'S most formidable hurricanes.

"Bellowing notes burst with a stormy sound." ADDISON.

CHORUS IN ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

Composed in 1738.

*"The Lord shall reign for ever and ever."
Exod. xv. 18.*

This most admirable composition which is written *a due cori*, begins by the tenors and counter-tenors, in unison, accompanied only by a ground base.

RECITATIVE.

*"For the horse of Pharaoh with his chariots," &c.
Exod. xv.*

Mr. Norris pronounced this and the following Recitative with the true energy of an Englishman, who perfectly comprehended and articulated the words.

CHORUS.

"The Lord shall reign for ever and ever."

The return to this short strain of Chorus, after each fragment of Recitative, has a fine effect.

RECITATIVE.

*"And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron,
"took a timbrel in her hand: and all the women
"went out after her with timbrels and with dances."
Exod. xv. 19.*

CHORUS.

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CHORUS.

“Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously (a). The Lord shall reign for ever and ever. The horse and his rider be hath thrown into the sea.” *Exod. xv. 21.*

The effects of this composition are at once pleasing, grand, and sublime! The aggregate of voices and instruments had here its full effect. And such is the excellence of this production, that if HANDEL had composed no other piece, this alone would have rendered his name immortal, among true lovers and judges of harmony (*b*).

Upon

(a) HANDEL's uncertainty in whatever concerned the accent and pronunciation of our language appears very remarkable in his manner of setting this last Chorus; where he accents the words, "*For he hath triumphed gloriously,*" thus: "*För hē hath trīumphed glōriously.*" But in the year 1738, when he composed the Oratorio of *Israel in Egypt*, our language was not very familiar to him; and he had then but little experience in setting it to Music.

(b) The art with which HANDEL, in the midst of all the fire of imagination and ebullition of genius, introduces a sober, *chanting* kind of counter-subject, while the other is carried on with uninterrupted spirit, is marvellous! (See printed Score, p. 265.) after giving this new subject alternately to different single parts, and sometimes to two parts in thirds, without diminishing the activity of the rest, which are continuing the general Chorus, he for a few bars (p. 277) makes this the principal vocal subject; and after being led off by the base, a regular reply is made by the other parts, in the fifth and octave. However, the instruments never let the first subject be forgotten, but contrive to play fragments of it, in accompanying the voices, during five bars that they are employed, solely, by the second subject. After which the first theme is resumed, and continued to the end, by all the Nineteen parts of this multifarious score. I should not have been so minute in my analysis of this Chorus, if it were not to point out a discovery which I made in perusing the score, and to which the performance, in the midst of the pleasure I received from it, had not led me. The discovery I mean is, that the intervals in this counter-subject are exactly the same as in the celebrated canon, *Non Nobis Domine*.



I will sing un-to the Lord.

Whether

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Upon the whole, the success of this day's performance may, with the utmost truth, be pronounced entire; as its effects surpassed the most sanguine expectations of the greatest enthusiasts for the honour of HANDEL, the glory of the profession, and prosperity of this grand enterprise. And, indeed, he must have been not only a fastidious, but a very ignorant and insensible hearer, who did not receive new and exquisite pleasure from the composition and execution of the pieces which were this day performed.

But, in justice to the audience, it may be said, that though the frequency of hearing good Music in this capital, of late years, has so far blunted the edge of curiosity and appetite, that the best Operas and Concerts are accompanied with a buzz and murmur of conversation, equal to that of a tumultuous croud, or the din of high 'Change; yet now, such a stillness reigned, as, perhaps, never happened before in so large an assembly. The midnight hour was never founded in more perfect tranquillity, than every note of these compositions. I have long been watching the operations of good Music on the sensibility of mankind; but never remember in any part of Europe, where I attended Musical exhibitions, in the Church, Theatre, or Chamber, to have observed so much curiosity excited, attention bestowed, or satisfaction glow in the countenances of those present, as on this occasion. The effects, indeed, upon many were

Whether the subject occurred to HANDEL accidentally, or was taken with design, I know not; but in either case, the notes are happily selected, and ingeniously used. As to the *original inventor*, or *right owner* of that series of notes upon which the canon, which tradition has given to Bird, was constructed, they had been the subject of fugue to Zarlino, and to old Adrian Villlaert, his master, long before Bird was born; and, indeed, constitute one of the different species of *tetrachord*, used by the Greeks, in the highest antiquity.

such

such as modern times have never before experienced. The *Choral power* of harmonical combinations affected some to tears, and fainting; while others were melted and enrapt, by the exquisite sweetness of *single sounds*. I had little leisure to contemplate the countenances of those around me; but, when I happened to turn my eyes from the performers, I saw nothing but tears of extacy, and looks of wonder and delight. Nothing, however, discovered the admirable discipline of the band, and unwearied and determined attention of the audience, so much as the *pauses*, which are so frequent in HANDEL's Music: for these were so unanimously calculated, and measured, that no platoon, or single cannon, was ever fired with more exact precision or unity of effect, than that with which the whole phalanx of this multitudinous band resumed its work, after all the sudden, and usually, unlimited cessations of sound, commonly called *pauses*, which, in general, catch loquacity in the fact; but now, at all these unexpected moments, the silence was found as awful and entire, as if none but the tombs of departed mortals had been present.

COM.

COMMEMORATION

OF

H A N D E L.

SECOND PERFORMANCE,

P A N T H E O N.

THURSDAY EVENING, May 27, 1784.

COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDED

SECOND PERFORMANCE

PAINTING

Thursday Evening May 27, 1884

LIST of the Pieces selected for the Second Performance.

P A R T I.

SECOND HAUTBOIS CONCERTO.

Sorge infausta, AIR in ORLANDO.

Ye Sons of Israel—CHORUS in JOSHUA.

Rende il sereno—AIR in SOSARMES.

Caro vieni—in RICHARD THE FIRST.

He smote all the first-born. CHORUS, from ISRAEL
IN EGYPT.

Va tacito e nascosto. AIR in JULIUS CÆSAR.

SIXTH GRAND CONCERTO.

M'allontano sdegnose pupille. AIR in ATALANTA.

He gave them hail-stones for rain. CHORUS—ISRAEL
IN EGYPT.

P A R T II.

FIFTH GRAND CONCERTO.

Dite che fà—AIR in PTOLEMY.

Vi fida lo sposo—in ÆTIUS.

Fallen is the foe, CHORUS, in JUDAS MACCHABÆUS.

OVERTURE OF ARIADNE.

Alma del gran Pompeo. Accompanied Recitative
in JULIUS CÆSAR.

Followed by

Affanni del pensier—AIR in OTHO.

Nasco al bosco — — in ÆTIUS.

Io t'abbraccio —DUET in RODELINDA.

ELEVENTH GRAND CONCERTO.

Ab! mio cor!—AIR in ALCINA.

ANTHEM. *My heart is inditing of a good matter.*

LIST of the Pieces selected for the Second Performance.

PART I.

SECOND HALTBOIS CONCERTO.

2nd Movement, Air in Orlando.
1st Movement—Chorus in Joshua.
2nd Movement—Air in Solomon.
3rd Movement—Chorus in Richard the First.
He smote all the first-born, Chorus, from Israel
in Egypt.
4th Movement, Air in Julius Caesar.
SIXTH GRAND CONCERTO.
1st Movement, Air in Atalanta.
The garden path—Chorus—Israel
in Egypt.

PART II.

FIFTH GRAND CONCERTO.

1st Movement—Air in Prometheus.
2nd Movement—Air in Ethio.
3rd Movement, Chorus, in Judas Macabeus.
OVERTURE OF ARIADNE.
Alma del gran Pompey, Accompanied Recitative
in Julius Caesar.

Followed by

Affaire du papier—Air in Otho.
Noces de bois — in Ethio.
Le l'abbaye — Duet in Robeline.

ELEVENTH GRAND CONCERTO.

1st Movement—Air in Atalanta.
Antienne. My heart is longing of a good night.

THE company, to-night, assembled very early, for fear of not gaining admiffion, and the croud was exceffive. Though the doors were not to be opened till Six o'clock, yet great numbers of well-dreffed people prefented themfelves at the entrance from Oxford-ftreet, before that time; and, by Seven, though the performance was not to begin till Eight, the whole building was fo full, that not another place could be obtained on any terms. The extreme heat of the weather, augmented by the animal heat of more than Sixteen hundred people, clofely wedged together, muft have confiderably diminifhed the delight which the lovers of Mufic expected to receive from this night's exhibition: when the body fufers, the mind is very difficult to be pleafed.

The unexpected fuccels, and wonderful effects, of the firft performance in the Abbey, had made impreffions, and raifed expectations in the public, which, on the reduced fcale that the inferior fize of the building required, were not likely to be fatisfied. Great concerts had often been heard in the Pantheon, and great crouds of the firft people in the kingdom, feen there before. And though the band was at leaft four times more numerous than ordinary, at this place, yet it was fo inferior, in number and effect, to that at the Abbey, that expectation feemed generally difappointed. The character and variety of the pieces, however, did as much honour to HANDEL, and to the felector of them, as their execution did to the performers.

This moft elegant building fo far furpaffes, in beauty, any other place appropriated to public amufements, throughout Europe, that it is infinitely

nitely more the wonder of foreigners, than natives; and yet these, however often they may have seen it, still regard it with fresh admiration; and though it was natural to think it impossible that any thing could be added to the splendor of this structure, the original architect, Mr. James Wyatt, so happily exercised his creative genius in the preparations for the reception of their Majesties and the company, that we shall present our readers with the following description of them.

The east and west galleries, and the passages behind the colonade, as well as the gallery over the orchestra, were filled up with benches, for company. In this gallery there was a new organ-case decorated with a transparent portrait of HANDEL, from an original painting, presented to the Concert of Ancient Music by Mr. Redmond Simpson, with boys in *chiaro oscuro*, holding a wreath of laurel. The Orchestra was considerably enlarged. Over the entrance into the Pantheon, opposite the Orchestra, was erected a gallery, supported by six Ionic columns, like those of the original building. In the center of this gallery was placed their Majesty's box, lined with crimson satin, and ornamented with looking-glasses. It was hung with curtains of crimson damask, fringed with gold. The cieling was elegantly painted in Mr. Wyatt's usual style of ornamental painting. The box was covered with a dome, in which were placed the royal supporters, in gold. Behind their Majesty's box, were seats for their attendants; and, on one side, for the Directors and their friends; and, on the other, for the maids of honour. The front of the royal box was decorated with crimson curtains and valances, fringed and laced with gold. The great dome of the Pantheon was illuminated with additional lamps, innumerable; and, as this was the first performance
here,

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here, that was honoured by the presence of their Majesties, not only the decorations, but the splendor of the company, exceeded whatever this beautiful building could boast before.

The band of to-night, consisting of two hundred of the most select performers who had been employed in the Abbey, with the addition of signor Paccherotti, the first singer at the Opera, among the vocal, was led by Mr. Cramer with his accustomed attention and fire. And as the performances in Westminster-Abbey manifested, in a wonderful manner, HANDEL's great powers, as an *Ecclesiastical* Composer, this evening's exhibition was judiciously calculated to display his abilities in *Secular*, and *Dramatic*, Music.

PART

P A R T I.

SECOND HAUTOBOIS CONCERTO.

THIS Composition, played as an Overture to the whole performance, had an admirable effect. The opening is remarkably grand, and accented; and the Largo, with Solo parts for two Violincellos, and a cantabile part for the Hautbois, quietly accompanied, is very rich in harmony and contrivance; but the double fugue, which first appeared among HANDEL's Organ fugues, is upon two of the most pleasing subjects, and treated, perhaps, in the most clear and masterly manner, of any instrumental fugue that has ever been composed. The Minuet and Gavot have considerable merit, of a lighter kind, and long delighted the frequenters of our theatres and public places (a).

The set of pieces, of which this is one, though called *Hautbois Concertos*, has very few solo parts for that instrument; most of the divisions, and difficult passages, being assigned to the principal Violin. Indeed these compositions, which are more in the style of Haydn's Symphonies, than modern Hautbois Concertos, with long solo parts for the display of abilities on that particular instrument, are admirably calculated for a large and powerful band, in which there are performers on various instruments, who merit distinction.

(a) The Hautbois part of this bold and masterly Concerto was played by Mr. Kellner, of his Majesty's military band; a scholar of Mr. Fischer, who, by his tone and execution, manifested himself to be a worthy disciple of so great a master.

A I R

AIR IN ORLANDO,

Composed 1732.

SIGNOR TASCA,

*Sorge infausta una procella
Che oscurar fa il cielo e il mare,
Splende fausta poi la stella,
Che ogni cor ne fà goder.*

*Può talor il forte errare
Ma risorto dall' errore,
Quel, che pria gli diè dolore
Causa immenso il suo piacer.*

Though furious storms awhile may rage,
And darknes ev'ry hope deny,
The Sun, at length, shall fear assuage,
And calm at once the heart and sky.

So men, endowed with virtue rare,
The lures of vice sometimes decoy;
Yet, freed from each insidious snare,
Conversion brings unbounded joy.

This is an Air abounding in that species of ingenious and masterly contrivance, which generally delights the eye and judgment of deep Musicians, much more than the public ear. An Opera, however, without such specimens of musical science, is never had in much reverence by professors. But, so changed is the style of Dramatic Music, since HANDEL's was produced, that almost all his songs seem *scientific*,

K CHORUS

54 COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.

CHORUS IN JOSHUA,

First performed 1747.

“ *Ye sons of Israel, every tribe attend,*
 “ *Let grateful Songs and Hymns to Heaven ascend ;*
 “ *In Gilgal, and on Jordan’s banks proclaim*
 “ *One First, one Great, one Lord Jehovah’s name.”*

This Chorus, unexpectedly bursting out of the second movement of the Overture, is of a very beautiful and singular kind. The first part, to the words, “ *Let grateful Songs and Hymns to Heaven ascend,*” is lively and chearful, without vulgarity, and the points of imitation new and pleasing; but in the last part, at the words, “ *In Gilgal, and on Jordan’s banks proclaim, one First, one Great, one Lord Jehovah’s name,*” the composition is truly grand, and sublime; uniting propriety of expression with as much learning and ingenuity of fugue, modulation, accompaniment, and texture of parts, as the art of Music can boast.

AIR IN SOSARMES.

Composed 1732.

Mr. HARRISON.

Rendi il sereno al ciglio
Madre, non pianger più,
Temer d’alcun periglio
Oggi mai come puoi tu.

May heav’n in pity smooth that brow,
 And dry a tender parent’s tear;
 Nor e’er again her heart allow
 To swell with sorrow so severe.

This

SECOND PERFORMANCE. 55

This is a short, but pathetic, and soothing strain, in a slow Siciliana movement, which HANDEL seldom fails to make interesting. I have been told that Strada, for whom this air was originally composed, captivated the audience extremely, by her performance of it. Few are now alive who can remember by what peculiar powers of voice or expression she delighted the public in this song, fifty-two years ago; though many are the hands that bore testimony to the accuracy, purity, and propriety, with which it was sung by Mr. Harrison, on the present occasion.

AIR IN RICHARD THE FIRST.

Composed 1727.

Miss CANTELO.

Caro vieni, vieni a me,

Fido vieni; puoi tu caro

Adolcire il duolo amaro

Di chi pena sol per te.

Pensa, pensa alla mia fè,

Pensa ancor al mio martir,

Ed a tanti miei sospir

Sarai solo la mercede.

Ah! come, and kindly ease my heart

Of all its pains, of all its fears;

Ah! faithful come, and joy impart,

Nor longer leave me thus in tears.

Think of my constancy and love,

Think of my unremitting woes;

Ah! come in smiles, and instant prove

How well, for thee, I lost repose.

56 COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.

This is an innocent, simple kind of Air, which requires no great abilities to perform, or science to hear. A pleasing well-toned voice, free from the English brogue and vulgarity, is all that is necessary to the singer; and a disposition to be pleased with musical tones, to the hearer. Miss Cantelo certainly brought the one to the Pantheon, and found the other there. Nothing can prove more clearly the difference of style in singing this species of Air, fifty years ago, than the shake which Cuzzoni made on the first note, and almost always on the word *caro*, wherever it occurred. A good shake, well applied, is certainly one of the first embellishments of good singing; but when injudiciously used, it is pert and unmeaning. Shakes are now sparingly used by the few who are able to make them, except at a close, and in old-fashioned French singing.

CHORUS, FROM ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

Composed 1738.

*“ He smote all the first-born of Egypt, the chief of
 “ all their strength, Ps. lxxvii. 52. But as for his
 “ people, he led them forth like sheep, Ibid. 53.
 “ He brought them out with silver and gold, there
 “ was not one feeble person in all their tribes.”
 Ps. cv. 36.*

Unimpassioned narrative supplies a composer with few opportunities of musical expression, or with that species of imitation, where the *sound* can, with propriety, be made *an echo* to the sense. But HANDEL, in the first movement of this admirable Chorus on two pleasing and uncommon subjects, in the accompaniments, which only
 mark

SECOND PERFORMANCE. 57

mark the accented parts of each bar, has excited an idea of *smiting*, and of *blows*. And in the course of this close and regular double fugue, when he gives the instruments more to do, he produces the same effects by short elementary sounds assigned to the voices, in plain counterpoint. The second movement; "*He led them forth like sheep*," is of a pastoral cast, with a mixture of fugue, and a termination, in close, compact, and well arranged full harmony, of syllabic counterpoint, or note against note.

AIR IN JULIUS CÆSAR.

Composed in 1723.

Signor PACCHIEROTTI.

*Va tacito e nascosto
Quand' avido è di preda
L' astuto cacciator.*

*Così chi è al mal disposto,
Non brama, ch' alcun veda
L' Inganno del suo cor.*

The wiley sportsman in pursuit of game,
Unseen, and silent, takes his aim;
So he whom malice, prompts to base designs,
With equal art, his plans combines.

Whoever is able to read a *score*, and knows the difficulty of writing in five real parts, must admire the resources which HANDEL has manifested in this. The French-horn part, which is almost a perpetual echo to the voice, has never been equalled in any Air, so accompanied, that I remember. Few great fingers are partial to songs in which the melody and importance are so equally divided;

58 COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.

but this Air was chosen to do honour to the abilities of HANDEL, on a day when they were to shine in full splendor. And signor Pacchierotti, by his judicious choice and excellent performance, at once contributed to the blaze of this great composer's reputation, and his own.

SIXTH GRAND CONCERTO.

The first movement is solemn and sorrowful; and the fugue, remarkably curious in subject; which is so unobvious and difficult to work, that no composer of ordinary abilities, in this learned species of writing, would have ventured to meddle with it, if such an unnatural series of sounds had occurred to him. The musette, or, rather chaconne, in this Concerto, was always in favour with the composer himself, as well as the public; for I well remember, that HANDEL frequently introduced it between the parts of his Oratorios, both before and after publication. Indeed, no instrumental composition which I had ever heard during the long favour of this, seemed to me more grateful and pleasing, particularly, in subject: the solo parts and divisions were not very new, at the time they occurred to HANDEL in this movement; but, probably, they render the return to the first theme the more welcome. To the rest of the Concerto, which was omitted in this performance, little praise is due, and, indeed, this seemed to be HANDEL's own opinion; as the two last movements were frequently omitted in performance, under his own direction.

SECOND PERFORMANCE. 59

AIR IN ATALANTA

Composed 1736.

MADAME MARA

*M'allontano sdegnose pupille
Per vedervi più liete, e serene,
E perch' abbian le vostre faville
Nudrimento minore di pene.*

A while I retire from your scorn and disdain,
Nor with spleen or resentment upbraid;
In hopes that by love, both my patience and pain
Will, with int'rest, in future be paid.

This Air, which was originally set for the celebrated Conti, *detto Gizziello*, from Gizzi, a famous singer, and, afterwards, singing-master, of whom he learned his art, though it requires in the singer no uncommon extent of voice, pathos, or execution, yet, by the grace, elegant simplicity, and sweetness, as well as power of voice, with which Madame Mara sung this pleasing song, she fortified the great reputation which she brought into this country, and which she had realized, and so much increased, by her performance in Westminster-Abbey. This Air, in which the base and other accompaniments are as quiet and simple as those of Hæssle and Vinci, of the same period; shews, that when HANDEL chose to make the singer more important than the Orchestra, the task was not difficult.

CHORUS

60 COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.

CHORUS IN ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

Composed 1738.

“ *He gave them hailstones for rain; Ps. cv. 32.*
“ *Fire mingled with the hail, ran along upon the*
“ *ground.*” *Exod. ix. 23, 24.*

This spirited and masterly movement, which was clamorously called for, a second time, is written *a due Cori*. It is one of the few Choruses, composed by HANDEL, in which there is no fugue, or point of imitation, except in the echos of the two choirs; but, *en revanche*, the instrumental parts are so active, and full, without occasioning the least confusion, that, if the eight voice parts were silent, the accompaniments might be played with good effect, as a movement in a Concerto: a circumstance difficult to point out, in the works of any other composer, than HANDEL.

PART

P A R T II.

FIFTH GRAND CONCERTO.

THE opening of this piece always impressed me with the idea of its being the most spirited and characteristic of all the movements that were written by HANDEL, or any other composer, on Lulli's model of Opera Overture; which seems to require a convulsive, determined, and military cast. The two following movements, of which only the first was played, contain little more than the light and common-place passages of the times. The *Largo*, however, is an excellent piece of harmony and modulation, in Corelli's natural and sober style; and, in the next movement, we have a very early specimen of the symphonic style of Italy, in which rapid iterations of the same note are designed to contrast with something better, if not mere noise and *remplissage*, totally devoid of meaning, of which there are but too frequent instances. The subject of HANDEL's movement is modern, marked, and pleasing; and the base accompaniment of his iterations, bold and interesting. The finale, or minuet of this Concerto, has been so much admired by English composers of HANDEL's school, as to have been frequently thought worthy of imitation.

AIR

62 COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.

AIR IN PTOLEMY.

Composed in 1728.

Miss ABRAMS.

*Dite che fà
Dove è l'idol mio,
Selvaggie deità
Dite dov' è
Il mio tesoro?
A me voi lo rendete
O pur se lo vedete
Ditegli per pietà
Che per lui moro.
O rendetelo al mio cor;
Dite che tutto amor,
Sospiro anch' io.*

Where is my Love ? and how employ'd ?
Ye Fawns and Dryads say ;
If to your rural haunts decoy'd,
Aloud repeat my lay.

In pity tell him ev'ry pain,
Each groan and rising sigh ;
That far from him I life disdain,
And only wish to die.

Ye rustic gods, oh tell him this,
Or bring him here to crown my bliss.
Where is my Love ? &c.

This air, which is pleasing, and modern in melody, for one that has fifty-six years on its head, is called the *Echo Song*, in the printed copy ; and said to have been sung by Signora Cuzzoni, and Signor Senesino. So few passages, however, are repeated, and those chiefly in the second part, that it had a very good effect, as a solo song, from the taste and expression with which it was sung by Miss Abrams.

AIR

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AIR IN EZIO, or ÆTIUS.

Composed 1732.

Signor BARTOLINI.

Vi fida lo sposo

Vi fida il regnante,

Dubbioso,

Ed amante

La vita,

E l'amor.

Tu, amico, prepara

Soccorso, ed aita:

Tu serbami, O cara,

Gli affetti del cor.

To thee I confide

My empire and bride;

And, in doubt while I rove,

My life, and my love:—

Do thou, my dear friend,

Assistance prepare—

While on thee I depend

Thy affection to share.

This Air, which is in a style peculiar to HANDEL, and the period in which he flourished, has, perhaps, been robbed a little of its beauty and grace, by time; it, however, filled up its niche in the Pantheon, with the assistance of Signor Bartolini, very agreeably. For my own part, who wish that whatever is good in its kind may live, and have a share of attention and favour, I confess, that a composition is the more curious, and welcome to my ears, in proportion as it *differs* from the Music in common use.

CHO-

64 **COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.**

CHORUS IN JUDAS MACCHABÆUS.

Composed 1746.

*Fall'n is the foe,
So fall thy foes, O Lord,
Where warlike Judas wields his righteous sword.*

This spirited, original, and excellent Chorus, which can never pass without honourable notice in any performance, received great force and energy from the manner in which it was executed to-night.

OVERTURE IN ARIADNE.

Composed 1734.

The great favour which this Overture so long enjoyed, particularly the *Minuet*, was here revived, and a new lease of longevity granted to it by HANDEL's *executors*. The number of French horns employed on this occasion very much enriched the harmony, and gave to the effect of this Air, unusual splendor and magnificence.

**ACCOMPANIED RECITATIVE IN
JULIUS CÆSAR.**

Composed 1723.

Signor PACCHIEROTTI.

*Alma del gran Pompeo,
Che al cener suo d'intorno
Invisibil t'aggiri,
Fur ombra i tuoi trofei,*

Ombra

SECOND PERFORMANCE. 65

*Ombra la tua grandezza, e un ombra sei!
Così termina al fine il fasto umano!
Feri chi vivo occupò un mondo in guerra,
Oggi, risolto in polve, un urna serra!
Tal di ciascuno, abi lasso!
Il principio è di terra
E il fine un sasso!
Misera vita! O quanto è fral tuo stato!
Ti forma un soffio, e ti distrugge un fiato.*

These are thy ashes, Pompey, this the mound,
Thy soul, invisible, is hovering round!
Thy splendid trophies, and thy honours fade,
Thy grandeur, like thyself, is now a shade.
Thus fare the hopes in which we most confide,
And thus the efforts end of human pride!
What yesterday could hold the world in chains,
To-day, transform'd to dust, an urn contains.
Such is the fate of all, from cot to throne,
Our origin is earth, our end a stone!
Ah wretched life! how frail and short thy joys!
A breath creates thee, and a breath destroys.

This admirable soliloquy of Cæsar over the ashes of Pompey. I have been frequently told by persons equally well skilled in Music and the Italian tongue, had an effect, when recited on the stage by Senesino, which no Recitative, or even Air, had before, in this country. But though delivered by Signor Pacchierotti, with the true energy and expression of heroic Recitative, for which he is so much celebrated in Italy by the best judges of the poetry and musical declamation of that country, had not the attention or success it deserved here, detached from its place in the Opera, and printed without a translation. Indeed, the audience, fatigued with the struggles for admission, the pressure of the croud in their seats, and relaxed by the accumulated heat of the weather and company, were neither so attentive to the performers, nor willing to be pleased by their exertions, as in Westminster-Abbey.

R E C I.

66 COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.

RECITATIVE, which Englishmen, unacquainted with the Italian language, always with as short as possible, is thought of such importance, in Italy, that it seems to include the carriage and gestures, as well as elocution of an Opera singer: for when it is said of one, *recita bene*, it is understood that *he*, or *she*, not only speaks Recitative well, but is a good *actor* or *actress*.

Tartini (a) gives an account of a piece of Recitative that was performed in an Opera at Ancona, in 1714, which had a very extraordinary effect on the professors employed in it, as well as the audience; for though it had no other accompaniment than a base, and consisted of only one line, it occasioned such agitation in all who heard it, that they trembled, turned pale, and regarded each other with fear and astonishment. And these extraordinary effects did not arise from complaints, sorrow, or tragic pathos of any uncommon kind; but from indignation, and an undefinable species of rigid severity and penetrating harshness in the sentiments of the words, the power of which was greatly augmented and enforced, both by the composer and performer. "During thirteen representations of this Drama," continues the intelligent and excellent Musician who has recorded these powers of Recitative, "the effect was still the same; and, after the first night, this terrible scene was constantly expected with the most profound silence."

An attention little inferior to this, according to tradition, was bestowed upon the scene in Julius Cæsar, when performed in England. The translation may, perhaps, convey some faint idea of the original words; nothing, however, but the Music itself, and the recitation of such a per-

(a) *Trattato di Musica*, cap. v. p. 135.

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former as Senesino, or Pacchierotti, can do justice to HANDEL's merit in setting them. Indeed, it is the finest piece of accompanied Recitative, without intervening symphonies, with which I am acquainted. The modulation is learned, and so uncommon, that there is hardly a chord which the ear expects; and yet the words are well expressed, and the phrases pathetic and pleasing.

This Recitative was followed by one of HANDEL's most celebrated pathetic Airs:

AIR IN OTTO,

Composed 1722.

Signor PACCHIEROTTI.

*Affanni del pensier,
Un sol momento,
Datemi pace almen
E poi tornate.
Ah! che nel mesto sen
Io già vi sento
Che ostinati la pace,
A me turbate.*

Afflicting thoughts, a short reprieve
In pity grant,
And then return;
But ah! for ever, I perceive,
My heart will pant
My bosom burn.

This exquisite Air was composed for Cuzzoni. Both the song, and her performance of it, were greatly admired by the best judges of the times; and it is not, perhaps, easy to find an Air of greater merit in any one of HANDEL's Italian operas. The melody is purely Sicilian; and though the instrumental parts are moving in
strict

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strict fugue, almost throughout, it is as free and unembarrassed, as if it was accompanied in simple counterpoint. It is so high as not to be in the pleasantest part of Signor Pacchierotti's voice: and, though he sung it with great feeling and expression, it was not tasted by the audience in the manner it deserved,

A I R I N E Z I O.

Composed 1732.

Signor T A S C A.

*Nasce al bosco in rozza cuna
Un felice pastorello,
E con l'aure di fortuna,
Giunge i regni a dominar.
Presso al trono in regie fasce
Sventurato un altro nasce,
E fra l'ire della sorte,
Va gli armenti a pascolar,*

Sometimes a happy rustic swain,
In cottage born, of humble stem,
Acquires with little toil and pain,
Through Fortune's smiles, a diadem.
While he that's blasted by her frown
To dire mischance is sure decreed;
And, though entitled to a crown,
A field may till, or flock may feed,

This is one of the most agreeable base songs that I know. The melody is pleasing, and accompaniment ingenious and spirited. And though the life of a musical composition is in general much shorter than that of man, yet this bears its age so well, that instead of fifty-two years old, it seems in all the vigour and bloom of youth. It was composed for Montagnano, one of the most celebrated base singers in HANDEL's service, when that species of voice was more in fashion, and perhaps

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perhaps more cultivated, than at present. The divisions require considerable flexibility, and the compass great extent of voice; both of which were well supplied by Signor Tasca.

DUET, IN RODELINDA,

Composed in 1725.

Madame MARA, and Signor BARTOLINI.

A 2. { *Io t'abbraccio;
E più che morte
Aspro e forte,
E pe'l cor mia
Questo addio
Che il tuo sen dal mio divide.*

Solo. *Ah mia vita!*

Sola. *Ah mio tesoro!*

A 2. { *Se non moro,
E più tiranno
Quest' affanno,
Che da morte, e non uccide.*

A 2. { *This last embrace is worse than death,
Without the loss of sense or breath;
What torture to a faithful heart,
From all that's dear, thus forc'd to part?*

Solo. *My love!*

Sola. *My life!*

Solo. *My only hope!*

Sola. *My faithful wife!*

A 2. { *How barbarous is a tyrant's will,
Which death can give, yet does not kill!*

The opening of modern Duets is generally more in Dialogue, and, perhaps, more dramatic, than was in fashion fifty or sixty years ago. Yet I am acquainted with no Duet upon the same model which pleases me more than this. It was introduced, with several of HANDEL's songs in a *pasticcio* Opera called *Lucio Vero*, in 1748; and I

L

never

70 COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.

never was more delighted than with the performance of it, particularly where the composer, in the course of his modulation, has made such a happy use of the sharp seventh of each new key, enforced by the instruments, in a manner which was then totally new to my ears. There is not a passage, or point of imitation, in this Duet, which breathes not grace and dignity; and so far is the whole composition from discovering its age, that it seems of a kind which must be immortal, or at least an evergreen; which, however times and seasons vary, remains fresh and blooming as long as it exists.

XIth GRAND CONCERTO.

The first movement of this Concerto, though masterly, and built on a solid foundation, is uncommonly wild and capricious for the time when it was composed; the fugue is on a marked and active subject, which reminds us a little of some of our author's other instrumental fugues; but the symphony, or introduction, of the *andante*, is extremely pleasing; and no less remarkable for its grace, than the boldness with which the composer, in order to bring in the answers to points of imitation, has used double discords, *unprepared*. The Solo parts of this movement were thought more brilliant, than easy and natural to the bow and finger-board, forty years ago. Indeed the last *Allegro*, which is airy and fanciful, has Solo parts that seem more likely to have presented themselves to the author at a harpsichord, than with a violin in his hand; however, the whole Concerto was played in a very chaste and superior manner, by Mr. Cramer; and it is but justice to this great performer to say, that with a hand which defies every possible diffi-

SECOND PERFORMANCE. 71

difficulty, he plays the productions of old masters with a reverential purity and simplicity, that reflect equal honour upon his judgment, good taste, and understanding.

AIR IN ALCINA,

Composed in 1735.

Madame M A R A.

Ab! mio cor! schernito sei?

Stelle! Dei! nume d'amore?

Traditore! t'amo tanto,

Puoi lasciarmi sola in pianto?

Oh Dei! perche?

Ma che fà gemendo Alcina?

Son regina, e temo ancora?

Resti, o mora.

Pene sempre,

O torni a me.

Ab! mio cor! &c.

Alas! my heart! thou art now despis'd!—

Ye pow'rs that move

Our hate and love,

Is this the way my passion's priz'd?

Left by a wretch, whose heart of steel

Is dead to all I say or feel.

But why let grief my soul devour?

I'm still a queen, and still have pow'r;

Which pow'r my vengeance soon shall guide,

If still my kindness he deride.

Alas! my heart! &c.

This song was always as much admired for its composition, as Strada for her manner of singing it, when the Opera of Alcina first appeared (a).

Perhaps

(a) Though near fifty years are elapsed since, yet there are three of the original performers in that Drama still living; Mrs. Arne, widow of the late Dr. Arne, who was at that time a scholar of Geminiani, and is called Mrs. Young, in the printed books;

72 **COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.**

Perhaps a modern composer, from the rage into which the enchantress is thrown in the Drama, by discovering the intended departure of her favourite hero, Rogero, would have given the lady less tenderness, and more passion; however that may be, the first strain of this Air, upon a continued moving base, is truly pathetic; and the constant sobs and sighs, expressed by short and broken notes in the violin and tenor parts, greatly add to this effect. Indeed, this movement contains some strokes of modulation which are extremely bold and pathetic, particularly at the words *sola in pianto*. The short second part likewise expresses much of the spirit, agitation, and fury, which the words and situation of the singer seem to require. If any one of the three surviving original performers in Alcina was present in the Pantheon during the performance of this Air, I cannot help supposing, that, in spite of partiality for old times, and reverence for Strada, he, or she would have agreed with the rest of the audience, in greatly applauding madame Mara's manner of singing this impassioned and difficult Air.

A N T H E M.

Composed for the Coronation of King GEORGE the Second, 1727.

“ My heart is inditing of a good matter; I speak
“ of the things which I have made unto the king.”
Pf. xlv. 1.

books. Mr. Savage, late sub-almoner, and vicar-choral of St. Paul's, who in the printed copy of the Music, is called *the boy*, and in the book of the words, *young Mr. Savage*; and Mr. Beard, so long the favourite singer, and, afterwards, manager in one of our theatres.

“ King's

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“ *King's daughters were among thy honourable women.*” Ibid. 10.

“ *Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in vesture of gold; and the king shall have pleasure in thy beauty.*” Ib. 12.

“ *Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers.*” Isaiah xlix. 23.

This most pleasing and admirable composition, the work of HANDEL's youth and leisure, contains so many peculiar beauties, than an enthusiastic commentator might fill a considerable volume in pointing them out. I shall try, however, in examining the score, to moderate my admiration more than I was able to do at its performance.

Of the first movement, the melody is remarkably well accented and pleasing; and the accompaniment clear, ingenious, and masterly. There is a dignity and sobriety in the movement and effect of the whole, well suited to compositions *à Capella*; however, this is so much in HANDEL's own style, that no recollection is awakened, either in the hearer or reader, of any other production, ecclesiastical or secular.

Indeed, nothing can exceed the several species of excellence with which this movement is replete, except that which immediately follows it:

“ *Kings daughters are among thy honourable women:*” which, not only sixty years ago was more original, but which still remains unrivalled and uncommon. Here a natural and beautiful melody is equally and artfully divided among the several principal voice-parts; while the violin accompaniments, in a different style of beautiful melody, are so far from occasioning confusion, that they help to unite and cement the whole together. The majestic and regular movement of the base upon which such an admirable structure is built, must strike

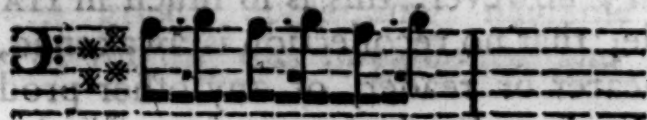
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strike judges of composition with as much wonder, as uninstructed lovers of Music with delight.

The third movement, "*Upon thy right hand,*" &c. is as graceful in melody as rich in harmony; and as new as if composed but yesterday, except in one favourite passage with HANDEL and his times, which being now a little *passé*, is, perhaps, too often repeated for modern hearers (a).

The fourth, and last movement, "*Kings shall be thy nursing fathers,*" is a full Chorus, big with all the fire, contrivance, rich harmony, and energy of genius, which HANDEL afterwards displayed in his best Oratorio Choruses. And this was the *finale* of the admirable miscellaneous concert of *Commemoration*; which if an exhibition of yet greater magnificence had not been given elsewhere, would have been still more admired, and worthy of celebrity.

(a) This is the passage: which, in the course of the movement, occupies upwards of thirty bars.



COM.

COMMEMORATION
OF
H A N D E L.

THIRD PERFORMANCE;

WESTMINSTER-ABBEY,

SATURDAY, May 29, 1784.

THE
M E S S I A H.

COMMEMORATION

AND

THIRD PERFORMANCE

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

26. MAY 1954

IV. E. 2. 2. 1. A. H.

THOUGH the company which attended this day's performance was considerably more numerous than that of Wednesday, yet, by the experience acquired, and measures pursued, such good order reigned in every department, that it was impossible to enter or quit a public place, of any kind, with more facility, or to be seated more commodiously, when there, than at this magnificent exhibition. And though the chief part of the audience, by coming early, had a long period to fill up, yet, suffering no inconvenience from numbers, heat, or cold; and having a building so venerable, so fitted up, and so filled, to examine, all the languor, lassitude, and tediousness were kept off, which usually seize both body and mind in public places, before the long expected pleasure arrives. The very filling the Abbey with such company, and the Orchestra with such performers, was a new, varied, and amusing spectacle, before the arrival of their Majesties and their beautiful offspring crowned the whole, and rendered the *ensemble* as enchanting to the eye, as such sublime Music, so exquisitely performed, must have been to every ear.

PART

P A R T I.

THE overture to the MESSIAH, though grave and solemn, always seemed to me more dry and uninteresting in the performance, than the rest of HANDEL's Overtures; but the force, energy, and dignity, given to every trait of melody, as well as mass of harmony, by this wonderful band, produced effects in it, which elude all description.

HANDEL's Overtures are generally analogous to the opening of the first scene of the Drama to which they belong, and may be called real prefaces or preliminary discourses to a book. In order therefore to suppress every idea of levity in so sacred a performance as the MESSIAH, he very judiciously finished the Overture without an Air. And the short symphony to the accompanied Recitative, or *Aria parlante*, "*Comfort ye my people,*" (Isai. xl. 1.) seems to such as are not acquainted with the Oratorio, a preparation for the light minuet, gavot, or jig, with which Overtures are usually terminated; but how exquisitely are judicious ears disappointed! Indeed, I am acquainted with no movement of the same cast, to the words of any language, which is more grateful and soothing than this. There is not a note, either in the principal melody or accompaniment, that is become vulgar, common, or unmeaning. Mr. Harrison, with his sweet and well-toned voice, did this Recitative and the following Air great justice, by delivering them with propriety

priety and the utmost purity and truth of intonation (a).

The Air, "*But who may abide the day of his coming,*" (Mal. iii. 2.) is in a Sicilian pastoral style, of which HANDEL was very fond, and in which he was almost always successful. And the Chorus: "*And he shall purify the sons of Levi,*" is of a peculiar cast: each species of voice delivering the primitive subject, unaccompanied by the rest, till the counter-subject, in ligature, or binding notes, is introduced, which adds to the effect of the whole, when the instruments come in, and all the voices, quitting the mazes of fugue, unite in simple counterpoint.

There is a very curious expression of the words attempted in the Air: "*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;*" (Isai. ix. 2.) where the chromatic and indeterminate modulation, seems to delineate the uncertain footsteps of persons exploring their way in obscurity. Whether this imitation is obvious, or possible to be made so, I know not; but there is merit in the attempt, when it involves no absurdity.

During the performance of this Oratorio, I made three several pencil-marks, expressive of the degrees of comparative good with which my ears

(a) HANDEL has certainly manifested great knowledge of the sentiments and import of the words he had to express in this Oratorio, though, when he set them, he was not perfectly acquainted with the pronunciation of our language: as, in the first Recitative, he has made a monosyllable of *cryeth*; in the first Chorus frequently allows but one note to the word *Glory*; and in the second Chorus of the second part, he has made the word *surely* a trisyllable. This great master, with all his musical riches and fertility of invention, was frequently obliged to be economical in his compositions as well as his affairs: and, when he was pressed for time, he often applied words to Music, instead of Music to words; taking from its niche, or his port-folio, a movement already composed. Perhaps this was the case with the first Chorus: *The glory of the Lord*; which, however, is an excellent composition, and had a fine effect in the performance.

were

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were affected, by particular movements; and I found the sign of superlative excellence stamped on the Chorus: "*For unto us a child is born,*" (Isai. ix. 6.); which has so much merit of various kinds, that I know not where to begin to praise it. The subjects of fugue are so agreeable; the violin accompaniments of such a peculiar character; and the clearness and facility which reign through the whole so uncommon, that each of them deserves to be particularly remarked; but at every introduction of the words "*Wonderful! Counsellor! the mighty God! the everlasting Father! the Prince of Peace!*" which he so long and so judiciously postponed, the idea and effect are so truly sublime, that, assisted by the grandeur and energy of this band, I never felt the power of Choral Music and full harmony, in enforcing the expression of words, so strongly before. There is poetry of the highest class in the Music, as well as the words, of this Chorus.

The PASTORAL SYMPHONY, which followed this *high-sounding* Chorus, played without wind-instruments by violins only, in the most subdued manner, was balmy and delicious! The pianos or whispers of such multiplied sounds, produced a sweetness of so new and exquisite a kind, that the musical *technica* furnishes no terms adequate to their effects.

R E C I T A T I V E.

"*There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.*" Luke ii. 8.

R E C I T A T I V E accompanied.

"*And lo! an Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were sore afraid.*" Matth. iii. 17. Luke ii. 9.

R E C I -

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RECITATIVE.

“ *And the Angel saith unto them, Fear not ; for, behold ! I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people ; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*” Luke ii. 10, 11.

RECITATIVE accompanied.

“ *And suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the Heavenly Host, praising God, and saying.*” Ibid. 13.

These Recitatives, as delivered by the sweet voice and articulate pronounciation of Madame Mara, had an effect far beyond what might be expected from such few and simple notes, without air, or measure: they were literally made “ *melting sounds,*” to every hearer of sensibility present. And the magnificent Chorus, “ *Glory be to God in the highest ! and peace on earth, good-will towards men !*” (Ibid. 14.) in which the *pianos* and *fortes* were admirably marked and observed, never had so great an effect before, in any performance within my knowledge. There is more *claire obscure* in this short Chorus than perhaps had ever been attempted at the time it was composed. The answers to the fugue succeeding each other so clearly and closely at the words “ *good-will towards men,*” must always please artists, who know the ingenuity and merit of such contrivances ; but the general effects of this Chorus want nothing in the ignorant, but attention and feeling, to afford them unaccountable delight. *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion ; shout ! O daughter of Jerusalem ; behold ! thy King cometh unto thee.* Zechariah ix. 9.

“ *He*

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“ *He is the righteous Saviour, and he shall speak peace unto the Heathen.*” Ibid. 10.

This brilliant and difficult Air afforded Madame Mara an opportunity of displaying some of her wonderful powers of execution, and shewed her in a very different light from any thing she had hitherto sung at the Commemoration; but so firm, sweet, and judicious, was her performance of every kind, and so delightful to the audience, that she never breathed a sound without effect.

“ *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd,*” (Isai. xl. 11.) is an Air in HANDEL’S best *Siciliana* style, and has ever been in great favour with performers and hearers: Guadagni, after Mrs. Cibber, established its reputation. It is similar in movement to the lulling pastoral at the end of Corelli’s Eighth Concerto, “ *Fatto per la notte di natale,*” and had a pleasing effect from the performance of Signor Bartolini, and Miss Cantelo.

PART

P A R T II.

THE Second Part of this divine Oratorio abounds in so many beauties of composition and effect, that I find one of my three marks affixed to almost every movement. The Chorus, "*Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world,*" (St. John i. 29.) has the single stamp of solemnity; but the Air, "*He was despised and rejected of men,*" (Isai. liii. 3.) has ever impressed me with the highest idea of excellence in pathetic expression, of any English song with which I am acquainted. "*Surely he hath borne our griefs,*" (Ibid. l. 4, 5.) is an admirable piece of learned counterpoint and modulation, and very expressive of the words. The subsequent *alla breve* fugue, to the words "*And with his stripes we are healed,*" is written upon a fine subject, with such clearness and regularity as was never surpassed by the greatest Choral composers of the sixteenth century. This fugue, which is purely vocal, and *à Capella*, as the instruments have no other business assigned them than that of doubling and enforcing the voice-parts, may fairly be compared with movements of the same kind in Palestrina, Tallis, and Bird, which, in variety, it very much surpasses.

C H O R U S.

"*All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.*" Isai. liii. 6.

This Chorus has a spirit, and beauties of composition, of a quite different kind: the base is
costretto,

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cofretto, and moving incessantly in quavers, while the voice-parts and violins express a roving, careless kind of pastoral wildness, which is very characteristic of the words. "*And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*" Isai. liii. 6. This fragment is full of sorrow and contrition.

The words of the admirable choral fugue: "*He trusted in God that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, if he delight in him.*" Matth. xxvii. 43. and Psal. xxii. 8.) which contain the triumphal insolence, and are prophetic of the contumelious language of the Jews, during the crucifixion of our Saviour, were very difficult to express; however, HANDEL, availing himself in the most masterly manner of the advantage of fugue and imitation, has given them the effect, not of the taunts and presumption of an individual, but the scoffs and scorn of a confused multitude (a).

"*Thy rebuke hath broken his heart; he is full of heaviness: he looked for some to have pity on him, but there was no man, neither found he any to comfort him.*" (Psal. lxix. 21.) This is a piece of accompanied Recitative of the pathetic kind, no less honourable to the Composer's feeling, than musical learning and recondite modulation: and all the sorrowful cast and expression of that and the Air which follows it: "*Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow!*" (Lam. of Jeremiah, i. 12.) were well preserved by the performance of Mr. Norris.

(a) He was so conscious of the merit of this movement, that he frequently performed it on key'd-instruments, as a lesson; and if he was pressed to sit down to play at such times as he felt no immediate impulse, this theme usually presented itself to his mind; when, making it the subject of extempore fugue and voluntary, it never failed to inspire him with the most sublime ideas, and wonderful sallies of imagination.

The

THIRD PERFORMANCE. 85

The happy construction of Westminster-Abbey for cherishing and preserving musical tones, by a gentle augmentation without echo or repetition, was demonstrated by no part of the performance more clearly than in that of Miss Abrams; whose voice, though sweet and of a good quality, is not regarded as Theatrical, but such as the Italians denominate *Voce di Camera*. Yet, in singing the pleasing Air, "*But thou didst not leave his soul in hell,*" (Ps. xvi. 11.) which she did with considerable taste and expression, her voice was rendered more audible in every part of that immense building, than it has ever been in any Concert-Room in London.

CHORUS,

"*Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift
up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory
shall come in!*" Psal. xxiv. 7.

SEMI-CHORUS,

"*Who is this King of Glory?*"

SEMI-CHORUS,

"*The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty
in battle.*"

SEMI-CHORUS,

"*Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift
up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory
shall come in!*"

SEMI-CHORUS,

"*Who is this King of Glory?*"

SEMI-CHORUS,

"*The Lord of Hosts; he is the King of Glory.*"

CHORUS,

"*The Lord of Hosts; he is the King of Glory.*"

M

All

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All these words are admirably expressed, and the contrasted effects of Semi-Chorus and Chorus, were never more striking than in the performance of to-day.

CHORUS.

"Let all the Angels of God worship him." Heb. i. 6.

This spirited fugue, seemingly on two subjects, is, perhaps, the most artificial that has been composed in modern times. HANDEL, in order to exercise his abilities in every species of difficulty which the most learned and elaborate Canonists and Fughists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were ambitious of vanquishing, has composed this movement in what ancient theorists called *minor Prolation*; in which the reply to a subject given, though in similar intervals, is made in notes of different value: as when the theme is led off in semibreves and answered in minims, or the contrary (a).

"The Lord gave the word; great was the company of the preachers?" Psal. lxxvii. 11.

The majesty and dignity of the few solemn notes with which this Chorus is begun, without instruments, received great augmentation now, from being delivered by such a number of base and tenor voices in unison; and the contrast of sensation occasioned by the harmony and activity of the several parts, afterwards, had a very striking effect.

(a) As it is only professors who can estimate the difficulty of finding a subject which will serve as an accompaniment to itself in notes of augmentation or diminution, it is to them that the examination of this Chorus is recommended, who will see that while one part is performing the theme in crotchets and quavers, another is constantly repeating it in quavers and semi-quavers: an exercise for ingenuity often practised about two hundred years ago, on a few slow notes, or in fragments of canto fermo; but never before, I believe, in so many parts, with such perfect airy freedom, or little appearance of restraint and difficulty.

"How

"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Isai. lii. 7. and Rom. x. 15.) is a very pleasing air, *alla Siciliana*, which Signor Bartolini sung with elegant simplicity. And "their sound is gone out," (Psal. xix. 4.) and "Let us break their bonds asunder," (Psal. ii. 3.) both upon two different subjects, are capital Choruses in a very different styles, as well as measure, and were performed with the utmost spirit and precision; but I hasten to speak of the Alleluiah, which is the triumph of HANDEL, of the COMMEMORATION, and of the musical art.

The opening is clear, chearful, and bold. And the words, "*For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,*" (Rev. xix. 6.) set to a fragment of canto fermo, which all the parts sing, as such, in unisons and octaves, has an effect truly ecclesiastical. It is afterwards made the subject of fugue and groundwork for the Alleluiah. Then, as a short episode in plain counter-point, we have "*The kingdom of this world,*" (Ib. ix. 15.)—which being begun *piano*, was solemn and affecting. But the last and principal subject proposed, and led off by the base—"And he shall reign for ever and ever," is the most pleasing and fertile that has ever been invented since the art of fugue was first cultivated. It is marked, and constantly to be distinguished through all the parts, accompaniments, counter-subjects and contrivances, with which it is charged. And, finally, the words—"King of Kings, and Lord of Lords," (Ib. xix. 16.) always set to a single sound, which seems to stand at bay, while the other parts attack it in every possible manner, in "*Allelujahs---for ever and ever,*" is a most happy and marvellous concatenation of harmony, melody, and great effects.

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Dante, in his *Paradiso*, imagines nine circles, or choirs of cherubs, seraphs, patriarchs, prophets, martyrs, saints, angels, and archangels, who with hand and voice are eternally praising and glorifying the Supreme Being, whom he places in the centre; taking the idea from *Te Deum laudamus*, where it is said: "*To thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry, &c.*" Now as the Orchestra in Westminster-Abbey, seemed to ascend into the clouds and unite with the saints and martyrs represented on the painted glass in the west window, which had all the appearance of a continuation of the Orchestra; I could hardly refrain, during the performance of the Allelujah, to imagine that this Orchestra, so admirably constructed, filled, and employed, was a point or segment of one of these celestial circles. And perhaps, no band of mortal musicians ever exhibited a more respectable appearance to the eye, or afforded a more extatic and affecting sound to the ear, than this.

"So sung they, and the empyrean rung
"With Allelujahs."

PART

P A R T III.

“ *I Know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he*
 “ *will stand at the latter day upon the earth:*
 “ *and though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh*
 “ *I shall see God. (Job xix. 25, 26.) For now is*
 “ *Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them*
 “ *that sleep.*” 1 Cor. xv. 20.

It has been said, I think, inconsiderately, “that
 “ the *Airs* of the *MESSIAH* are greatly inferior to
 “ most of those in *HANDEL*’s Operas, and other
 “ Oratorios.” It would not, however, be difficult
 to point out eight or ten *Airs* of peculiar merit
 in this Oratorio; among which, “ *Every*
 “ *Valley*”—preceded by the accompanied Recitative,
 “ *Comfort ye my people—He shall feed his flock*
 —*He was despised—and I know that my Redeemer*
liveth”—are so excellent, that it would not be
 easy to find their equals in any one of his Operas
 or other Oratorios. Indeed, the universal rapture
 visible in the countenances of this uncommonly
 numerous and splendid audience, during the whole
 time that madame Mara was performing the very
 affecting Air with which the III^d part of the *MES-*
SSIAH is opened: “ *I know that my Redeemer liveth,*”
 exceeded every silent expression of delight from
 Music which I had ever before observed. Her
 power over the sensibility of the audience seemed
 equal to that of Mrs. Siddons. There was no eye
 within my view which did not

———“ *silently a gentle tear let fall.*”

Nor,

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Nor, though long hackneyed in Music, did I find myself made

“ of stronger earth than others.”

At the end of her performance of this Air, the audience seemed bursting with applause for which the place allowed of no decorous means of utterance. The Italians, when much pleased with Music in their churches, manifested rapture by coughing, spitting, blowing their noses, or scraping their feet, which with us are expressions of contempt. The construction, however, of these audible signs are easy and intelligible, when once they are settled by national compact.

After this justly admired Air, the short Semi-chorus: “ *Since by man came death,*” in plain counterpoint, by the principal soprano, counter-tenor, tenor, and base, without instruments, had a sweet and solemn effect, which heightened the beauty of the following Chorus: “ *By man came also the resurrection of the dead.*” And the Semi-chorus, “ *for as in Adam all die,*” sung in the same unaccompanied manner, by three of the best singers in each of the four species of voice, contrasted admirably with the full Chorus—“ *Even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*”

The effect of contrast in these movements, alternately sung with, and without instruments, was so agreeable and striking, that it were to be wished more frequent use was made of such an easy expedient.

The favourite Base song, “ *The Trumpet shall sound,*” (1 Cor. xv. 52.) was very well performed by Signor Tasca and Mr. Sarjant, who accompanied him on the trumpet admirably. There are, however, some passages in the trumpet-part to this Air, which have always a bad effect, from the natural

tural imperfection of the instrument. In HANDEL's time, composers were not so delicate in writing for Trumpets and French-horns, as at present; it being now laid down as a rule, that the fourth and sixth of a key on both these instruments; being *naturally* so much out of tune that no player can make them perfect, should never be used but in short passing notes, to which no base is given that can discover their false intonation. Mr. Sarjant's tone is extremely sweet and clear, but every time that he was obliged to dwell upon G, the fourth of D, displeasure appeared in every countenance; for which I was extremely concerned, knowing how inevitable such an effect must be from such a cause (a).

The Chorus—" *But thanks be to God,*" (Ibid. 57.) and the Air—" *If God is for us,*" (Rom. viii. 31), sung by Miss Cantelo, were well performed, and had very pleasing effects.

" *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.* Rev. v. 12.

" *Blessing and honour, glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever! Amen.*" Ibid. 13.

Of these three final Choruses it is difficult to determine which is the best, or had the grandest effect, from the very uncommon force and accuracy with which they were now performed. But

(a) In the Allelujah, p. 150, of the printed score, G, the fourth of the key, is sounded and sustained during two entire bars. In the Dettingen *Te Deum*, p. 30, and in many other places, this *false concord*, or interval, perpetually deforms the fair face of harmony, and indeed the face of almost every one that hears it, with an expression of pain. It is very much to be wished that this animating and brilliant instrument could have its defects removed by some ingenious mechanical contrivance, as those of the German flute are, by keys.

though

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though these three admirable movements are all in the same key and measure, yet their characters are totally different: the first—" *Worthy is the Lamb*—in solemn, simple counterpoint, and modulation, is slow; with alternate strains of an accelerated movement, to which there is a very ingenious and pleasing accompaniment for the violins, totally different from the voice-parts.

" *Blessing and honour, glory and power (a), be*
 " *unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the*
 " *Lamb, for ever and ever.*"

This

(a) The seeming contraction of the words in the notation of this passage, has a barbarous appearance to the eye: as HANDEL has allowed but three notes to five syllables; though the time is so slow (*Larghetto*) that no elision in fingering them seems necessary.

e. g.



Blessing and honour, glory and



power, be un-to him, &c.

The composer, from the little experience he had had in setting English words, in the year 1741, thinking the rapid manner in which the language is pronounced in conversation should be followed in reading and singing poetry and lofty prose, set the words of this Chorus thus:



Blessing and honour, glory and



power, be unto him.—

and this notation has been literally followed in all transcripts and editions of the Oratorio ever since.

This

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This second Chorus on a marked, spirited, and pleasing subject of fugue, in the style of *canto fermo*, is led off by the tenors and baxes, in unison; then it is repeated by the trebles and octave higher, without accompaniments, till the point:—"that sitteth upon the throne," is answered by the tenors. After which the counter-tenors introduce the first subject, and are followed by the baxes. When all the parts have sung the whole subject, which is long, particular sections of it are made points of imitation. And after the fugue has been well treated in all the relative keys, while the violins are moving in semi-quavers, the important words "*blessing, honour, glory,*"—are distinctly and judiciously pronounced by all the vocal parts together, in plain counterpoint, with a crotchet rest, or musical comma, between each of them. Then, with a fire, spirit, and resources peculiar to HANDEL, this admirable Chorus is wound up with reiterations of the words "*for ever and ever,*" in all the splendor of full harmony and animated movement.

And, at length, when those who hear the MESSIAH for the first time imagine the whole performance to be completely and gloriously finished, a *finale* is led off by the baxes, in a fugue, upon a noble subject, to the Hebrew conclusive term of devotion, *Amen*. In the course of this movement the subject is divided, subdivided, inverted, enriched with counter-subjects, and made subservi-

This little defect would certainly not have been pointed out here, had it not been with the wish of indicating an apology for it, and a cure. In future editions and transcripts of so classical a production, it seems necessary to recommend the correction of this and a few other similar inaccuracies, lest mere verbal critics, laying too much stress on such trivial defects, should endeavour to diminish the glory of the author and his work. And, indeed, however slight or unimportant such oversights may be to lovers of Music, to mere grammarians and philologers, they appear unpardonable.

ent

ent to many ingenious and latent purposes of harmony, melody, and imitation; with the effects of which, though all must be struck and delighted, yet those only are able to comprehend the whole merit of contexture in this Chorus, who have studied harmony or counter-point, and are capable of judging of design, arrangement, contrivance, and all the ingenious mazes and perplexities of elaborate compositions. Here HANDEL, unembarrassed by words, gave a loose to genius, liberated from all restraints but those of his own art. An instrumental fugue could not be more free and unconfined than this, upon an open vowel, and a syllable that terminates with the easy appulse of the tongue and teeth, which the liquid letter *n* requires. Symphonies of a solemn kind, without singing, are frequently played in the Italian churches, during the *Messa bassa*, or silent celebration of the mass. And divisions on particular words and syllables, which are thought innovations and modern fopperies, have been proved of the highest antiquity in the church, and the authority of Saint Augustine has been cited in apology for their use (a).

(a) "When we are unable to find words worthy of the Divinity, we do well, says this saint, to address him with confused sounds of joy and thanksgiving. For to whom are such extatic sounds due, unless to the Supreme Being? And how can we celebrate his ineffable goodness, when we are equally unable to adore him in silence, and to find any other expressions of our transports, than inarticulate sounds?" *History of Music*, vol. ii. p. 172.

Selection of Sacred Music for the Fourth Commemoration Performance.

P A R T I.

OVERTURE—ESTHER.
The Dettingen TE DEUM.

P A R T II.

OVERTURE OF TAMERLANE, and Dead March in
SAUL.

Part of the FUNERAL ANTHEM.

When the ear heard him.

He delivered the poor that cried.

His body is buried in peace.

GLORIA PATRI, from the JUBILATE.

P A R T III.

AIR AND CHORUS—*Jehovah crown'd with glory
bright.* In ESTHER.

FIRST GRAND CONCERTO.

CHORUS—*Gird on thy sword.* In SAUL.

FOURTH HAUTBOIS CONCERTO.

ANTHEM—*O sing unto the Lord all the whole earth.*

CHORUS—*The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.*

ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

CORONATION ANTHEM. *Zadoc the Priest.*

Selection of Sacred Writings for the Fourth Volume.
Inscribed by the Author.

PART I.

Of the Nature and
The Design of the Work.

PART II.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

Part of the History of the Church.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

PART III.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

Of the Nature and Design of the Work.

COMMEMORATION
OF
H A N D E L.

FOURTH PERFORMANCE;
WESTMINSTER-ABBEY,

June 3, 1784.

BY COMMAND OF HIS MAJESTY.

PART

COMMEMORATION

OF

HANDED

FOURTH PERFORMANCE

WESTMINSTER-ABBEY

June 3, 1784

BY COMMAND OF HIS MAJESTY

PART

INTRODUCTION.

THE preceding performances having given such entire satisfaction to all that were present, and becoming, of course, the general subject of discussion and praise, excited a great desire in all lovers of Music, and even of splendid spectacles, who were absent, to be enabled to judge and speak of transactions so memorable, from the conviction of their own senses. But even these were not more eager in wishing there might be a repetition of the performances, than those who had already attended them. Luckily for all parties, the wishes of their Majesties coincided with those of their subjects; and as the scaffolding was still standing, and the band not yet dispersed, two more opportunities were given for the display of HANDEL's wonderful powers, and the gratification of public curiosity.

On Monday, the last day of May, these two additional performances had the advantage of being announced in the public papers, with the most honourable and indubitable testimony of Royal Patronage, in the following manner.

B Y

“ By **COMMAND** of His **MAJESTY**.

In Commemoration of **HANDEL**, under the Direction of the

Earl of Exeter
Earl of Sandwich
Earl of Uxbridge

Sir Watkin Williams Wynn,
Bart.
Sir Richard Jebb, Bart.

On **THURSDAY** next, the 3d of June, there will be an additional performance of

S A C R E D M U S I C,

In Westminster-Abbey,

Consisting of the following Pieces composed by that Great Master.

P A R T I.

Overture, *Esther*.
The Dettingen Te Deum.

P A R T II.

Overture, *Tamerlane*—with the Dead March in *Saul*.
When the Ear heard him,
He delivered the Poor that cried, } From the Funeral An-
His Body is buried in Peace, } them.
Gloria Patri, from the *Jubilate*.

P A R T III.

First Grand Concerto.

Chorus.—Gird on thy Sword, from *Saul*.

Fourth Hautboy Concerto.

Anthem.—O sing unto the Lord all the whole Earth.

Chorus.—The Lord shall reign for ever and ever, from *Israel* in *Egypt*.

Coronation Anthem.—Zadock the Priest.

The doors will be opened at Nine o’Clock precisely, and the performance will begin at Twelve, when the doors will be shut.

Tickets for this Performance will be delivered at One Guinea each, at the St. Alban’s Tavern, in St. Alban’s-street, and no where else, on Tuesday the 1st, and Wednesday the 2d of June, between the hours of Ten in the morning, and Ten in the evening of each day, and after that time no Tickets can be delivered, or Money taken; but when the number of Tickets shall be judged sufficient to fill the places allotted for the company, the delivery of them will be stopped before the hour of Ten on Wednesday night.

The profits arising from this performance, as well as those of the former ones, will be applied to charitable purposes.”

“ By COMMAND of Her MAJESTY.

On Saturday next, June 5, being the LAST DAY of the
COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL,

Will be performed in Westminster-Abbey,

Under the Management of the

Earl of Exeter

Earl of Sandwich

Earl of Uxbridge

Sir Watkin Williams Wynn,

Bart.

Sir Richard Jebb, Bart.

The SACRED ORATORIA of

T H E M E S S I A H.

The doors will be opened at Nine o’Clock precisely, and the performance will begin at Twelve, when the doors will be shut.

Tickets to be had at the St. Alban’s Tavern, on Friday next, and no where else, from Eight in the Morning, till Ten at Night.

The profits arising from this performance, as well as those of the former ones, will be applied to charitable purposes.”

Experience is such an admirable instructress, that every little perplexity, or unexpected embarrassment, which had occasioned the least trouble or inconvenience to the company, in approaching or entering the Abbey, had been so entirely removed by the well-concerted measures which the Directors and their assistants had taken, that no assemblies equally numerous were, perhaps, ever formed before, on any occasion, with such perfect facility as these.

Though the pieces performed in the Abbey, on the first Day of Commemoration, were so admirably executed, and universally approved, yet as there were a few changes and additions to be made at the particular instance of his Majesty, a public rehearsal was advertised for Wednesday, at which upwards of Eight hundred persons were present, who paying half guineas for admission, considerably augmented the clear profits appropriated to charitable purposes.

The order in which the several pieces of this day were performed, is the following :

N

PART

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The order in which the several pieces of this day were performed, is the following :

N

PART

P A R T I.

OVERTURE IN ESTHER. 1722.

THE DETTINGEN TE DEUM. 1743.

OF these excellent productions, nothing need be added to what has already been said, in the account of the first day's performance (*a*); except, that for accuracy of execution, and grandeur of effect, they now merited still warmer praise.

(*a*) See p. 29, 30.

PART

P A R T II.

OVERTURE IN TAMERLANE.

Composed 1724.

WITH THE DEAD MARCH IN SAUL,

1740.

<i>When the ear heard him, &c.</i>	} Funeral Anthem.
<i>He delivered the poor that cried, &c.</i>	
<i>His body is buried in peace, &c.</i>	
<i>Gloria Patri</i> - - -	Composed 1737.
	<i>Jubilate</i> 1713.

THE only change that was made in the pieces of this part of to-day's performance, was playing the two first movements of the Overture in *Tamerlane*, instead of the first movement of the Overture in *Saul*, which was very judicious, and produced an admirable effect. The opening of the Overture in *Tamerlane* is remarkably majestic in itself; and the powerful manner in which all the parts were this day enforced, augmented its dignity and importance. The fugue, upon a marked, lively, and airy subject, is so closely and ingeniously worked, as to be continually heard in one or other of the parts; for even where the haut-bois are left to themselves, the solo passages allotted to them arise either out of the subject of the movement, or its inversion. It was wonderfully compact in performance, and after being twice played with the precision of a few select hands, and the effect of myriads; from its being in a minor key, and in an animated movement, it contributed much to brighten the grateful richness of the harmony, as well as to give dignity to the slow and solemn measure, of the

DEAD MARCH IN SAUL.

N 2

P A R T

P A R T III.

AIR AND CHORUS IN ESTHER.

Composed in 1720 (a).

A I R.

*Jehovah crown'd with glory bright,
Surrounded with eternal light,
Whose ministers are flames of fire,
Arise, and execute thine ire (b).*

C H O R U S.

*He comes, he comes, to end our woes,
And pour his vengeance on our foes.
Earth trembles, lofty mountains nod,
Jacob arise, to meet thy God.
He comes, &c. (c).*

(a) Though this Oratorio was composed so early as 1720, for the duke of Chandos, at Cannons, yet it was not publicly performed till May, 1732; when it ran during ten nights.

(b) This Air is more than an imitation of the following lines in the last Chorus of the 2d Act of Racine's Esther.

*O Dieu, que la gloire couronne !
Dieu, que la lumière environne !
Qui voles sur l'aile des vent,
Donne à ton nom la victoire.*

(c) *Arme-toi, vien nous defendre.
Descends tel qu'autrefois la Mer te vit descendre.
Que les mechans apprennent aujourd'hui
A craindre ta colere.*

I never could ascertain who was the writer of this Oratorio, in English: according to the author of the *Bibl. Brit. Tom. xv.* 1740, it was ascribed to Pope and Arbuthnot; but, by whomsoever it was produced, there is certainly something in many of the lines that seems entitled to the name of poetry.

The

FOURTH PERFORMANCE. 105

The invocation to the Divinity in the Air, as well as his annunciation in the subsequent Chorus, are set in a style so peculiarly grand, that they ought not to be passed by without something more than an indiscriminate acknowledgment of their excellence.

The opening of this scene in the first Sacred Drama that was set to Music by HANDEL, bears all the marks of a grand and sublime genius. He was now arrived at the age of thirty-six, when, after writing for the first performers in Europe, vocal and instrumental, his judgment was matured sufficiently to guide, without abating his fire and enthusiasm. And this Chorus seems entitled to admiration for a different species of merit from the generality of his Oratorio Choruses, to which we listen with wonder, at the knowledge, contrivance, art of fugue, or richness of harmony, with which they abound; for this has all the spirit and activity of a composition truly *dramatic*. And the perpetual agitation of the instrumental parts helps the expression of the words, in a most wonderful manner.

Indeed the accompaniments are so full and complete, that they seem to have been written before the voice-parts, which are chiefly in plain counterpoint; furnishing such simple fundamental harmony as the right-hand of a harpsichord-player might compress into chords, in accompanying the base. There is neither fugue nor imitation carried on in this Chorus, except for a few bars, at the words, "*to end our woes---And pour his vengeance on our foes.*" But at the second strain--- "*Earth trembles,*" &c. there is a grandeur of expression and effect, which, as it was the first time I had ever heard this composition performed, acted on my feelings in a very uncommon manner.

As

106 COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.

As some of my readers may, perhaps, wish to know a few circumstances belonging to the history of this *primitive* Oratorio, besides those that have been related in the Life of HANDEL; p. 37; the following information has been obtained from Dr. Randal, the musical professor at Cambridge, and Mr. Barrow, who were among the original performers, when it was dramatically represented.

On the first performance of ESTHER, in action, at the house of Mr. Bernard Gates, Master of the Children of the Chapel-Royal, in 1731, the parts were cast in the following manner :

Esther	-	-	by Mr. John (now Dr.) Randal,
Assuerus, and first Israelite			James Butler.
Haman	-	-	John Moore.
Mordecai, and Israelite Boy	-		John Brown.
Priest of the Israelites	-	-	John Beard.
Harbonah	-	-	Price Clevely.
Persian Officer, and 2d Israelite			James Allen,
Israelites	}		Samuel (late Dr.) Howard.
and			Mr. Thomas Barrow.
Officers			Robert Denham.

Soon after this, it was twice performed by the same children, at the Crown and Anchor, by the desire of William Huggins, Esq. a member of that Society, and translator of Ariosto, published 1757, who furnished the dresses. Mr. HANDEL himself was present at one of these representations, and having mentioned it to the Princess Royal, his illustrious scholar, her Royal Highness was pleased to express a desire to see it exhibited in action at the Opera-house in the Hay-market, by the same young performers; but Dr. Gibson, then bishop of London, would not grant permission for its being represented on that stage, even with books in the children's hands. Mr. HANDEL, however, the next year, had it performed at that theatre, with additions to the Drama,

by

FOURTH PERFORMANCE. 107

by Humphreys ; but in *still life* : that is, without action, in the same manner as Oratorios have been since constantly performed. The Drama exhibited by the children consisted only of two acts : beginning with the Recitative, “ *Tis greater far,*” &c. as it had been originally set for the duke of Chandos.

The first Oratorios that were performed in Italy, at the beginning of the last century, were *sacred Dramas*, or *Representations*, performed in action : and *Esther* and *Athalie* were exhibited in France, at the convent of St. Cyr, in that manner. It seems to have been a custom of very ancient standing, for our court to employ the children of the chapel in dramatic representations, under the direction of the master of the revels. And in the household book of the earls of Northumberland, it appears that the same use was originally made of the singing-boys of their domestic chapel. It appears likewise that most of Ben Jonson’s Masques, written for queen Elizabeth and king James the First, were acted and sung by the children of the Chapel-Royal ; and among his Epigrams, we find an epitaph on S. P. a child of queen Elizabeth’s chapel, whose talents for acting are more celebrated than those for singing (*a*).

FIRST

(*a*) “ Weep with me all you that read
 This little story :
 And know for whom a tear you shed,
 Death’s self is sorry.
 ’Twas a child that so did thrive
 In grace and feature,
 As heav’n and nature seem’d to strive
 Which own’d the creature.
 Yeares he number’d scarce thirteen
 When *Fates* turn’d cruel,
 Yet three fill’d zodiackes had he been
 The stages jewel ;

And

FIRST GRAND CONCERTO.

If the epithet *grand*, instead of implying, as it usually does, many parts, or a Concerto requiring a great band or Orchestra, had been here intended to express sublimity and dignity, it might have been used with the utmost propriety; for I can recollect no movement that is more lofty and noble than this; or in which the treble and base of the *tutti*, or full parts, are of two such distinct and marked characters; both bold, and contrasted, not only with each other, but with the solo parts, which are graceful and *chantant*. Nor did I ever know so much business done in so short a time; that movement contains but thirty-four bars, and yet nothing seems left unsaid; and though it begins with so much pride and haughtiness, it melts, at last, into softness; and, where it modulates into a minor key, seems to express fatigue, languor, and fainting.

The subject of the next movement is gay and pleasing. And, when the first violin has a series of iterated notes, in scale, by thirds with the base, the second violin renders them interesting by the poignancy of sharp fifths, mounting up to sixths, used as *appoggiaturas*, or notes of taste. In the *adagio*, while the two trebles are singing in

And did act, what now we moane
 Old men so duely,
 As sooth the *Parce* thought him one,
 He play'd so truely.
 So by error to his fate
 They all consented;
 But viewing him since, alas too late,
 They have repented;
 And have sought to give new birth,
 In bathes to steep him;
 But, being so much too good for earth,
 Heav'n vows to keep him."

Ben Jonson's Works, Fol. Edit. p. 38.

the

FOURTH PERFORMANCE. 109

the style of vocal duets of the time, where these parts, though not in regular fugue, abound in *imitations* of the fugue kind; the base, with a boldness and character peculiar to HANDEL, supports with learning and ingenuity the subject of the two first bars, either direct or inverted, throughout the movement, in a clear, distinct, and marked manner. The fugue upon an airy pleasing theme, is closely worked and carried on from the beginning to the end without episode, or division foreign to the subject, and in a modulation strictly confined to the key note and its fifth: those who know the merit and difficulty of this species of composition can alone be sensible of our author's resources and superiority, whenever fugue is in question. The last *Allegro*, in the time of a quick Minuet, contains many graceful and pleasing passages, particularly in the solo parts. I have often heard this Concerto well performed at Vaux-hall, Ranelagh, and other places, soon after its publication, by what were, then, thought *great bands*; but the force, dignity, and importance given to every passage and combination by this unparalleled band, renovated and surpassed all the pleasure it ever afforded me before.

CHORUS IN SAUL.

Composed 1740.

*Gird on thy sword, thou man of might,
Pursue thy wonted fame;
Go on, be prosperous in fight,
Retrieve the Hebrew name.*

*Thy strong right hand with terror arm'd,
Shall thy obdurate foes dismay;
While others, by thy virtue charm'd,
Shall crowd to own thy righteous sway.*

This

110 COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.

This Chorus is extremely animating and spirited; and, as the words imply, being intended to rouse and stimulate a hero to take the field, seemed, in the performance by so numerous a band, to express the clamorous entreaties of a whole people. The point, "*retrieve the Hebrew name,*" led off in the middle of this Chorus, contrasted admirably with the artful and intentional confusion of the beginning; and the artless simplicity of the last movement,---"*while others by thy virtue charmed,*" led off in a kind of *canto fermo*, by upwards of sixty tenor voices, in unison, had an effect to which our ears are wholly unaccustomed. Indeed, the powerful manner in which this subject was delivered, singly, by the other parts, as well as the ingenuity of the accompaniment, and united force of the whole band, augmented throughout by the *tromboni*, when every voice and every instrument was employed, must have astonished, by the novelty of the effects, not only the unlearned lovers of Music, but the most scientific and experienced Musicians present.

FOURTH HAUTBOIS CONCERTO (a).

I received such pleasure in my youth from all the six admirable Concertos, of which this is one, that as I had not heard them performed for many years, I rejoiced much to see two of them in the list of Commemoration-pieces; and still more, on hearing them, to find that they had not

(a) During the Opera regency of the Royal Academy, the Directors, at the close of a season, finding their finances in a better state than usual, determined to sacrifice a night to the emolument of the *Orchestra*. And a Concert being thought most likely to turn out profitable, Dr. Arbuthnot undertook to manage, and HANDEL to compose an Overture on the occasion. It was then that he produced this fourth Concerto, which from the use to which it was applied, was called the *Orchestra-Overture*.

lost

FOURTH PERFORMANCE. 111

lost ground in my affection. To assert that they were never so well performed before, even under the author's own direction, is saying but little ; as he was never master of so numerous or well disciplined a band. Indeed, such is the power of good performance, that it will give meaning and interest to ordinary Music ; but compositions so intrinsically good as these, so rich in harmony, melody, and contrivance, must be still more heightened and sublimed. The opening of this fourth Hautbois Concerto is full, bold, and spirited, in the Overture style ; the second movement is constructed upon one of the most airy themes, that ever was made the subject of fugue ; and it is still chequered, and enlivened by Miscellaneous passages. The third movement is a very agreeable Air, in minuet time, *alla caccia*. Indeed, this movement is so much in the French-horn style, that it seems to call for that instrument. The fourth movement is a short fugue, in a minor key, with solo parts for the two violins. The *finale* is a very pleasing minuet, with a solo part for a bassoon. The late celebrated performer on that instrument, Miller, used to acquire great applause by his tone, and manner of playing this movement, at public places. It was now performed by twenty-four bassoons, of which the unity of effect was truly marvellous. The violoncellos were very judiciously ordered to play only the under part in this strain.

And here it seems but indispensable justice to observe, that Mr. Fischer performed the solo parts of this Concerto, upon the Hautbois, with such exquisite taste and propriety, as must have convinced all those who heard him, that his excellence is not confined to the performance of his own very original and ingenious productions. Indeed, one of the Commemoration-wonders seems to

to have been, the perfect manner with which the sweet and grateful tone of his single instrument filled the stupendous building, where this excellent Concerto was performed.

I have dwelt the longer on this Concerto, as it is one of the most masterly and pleasing of HANDEL's instrumental productions. It was the fashion, during his life-time, to regard his compositions for violins, as much inferior to those of Corelli and Geminiani; but I think very unjustly. If those two great masters knew the finger-board and genius of their own instrument better than HANDEL, it must be allowed, *per contra*, that he had infinitely more fire and invention than either of them. Corelli was naturally graceful, symmetrical, and polished, but timid; Geminiani more bold, inventive, and rhapsodical, was frequently deficient in rhythm, and air. Indeed, his Music is so little phrased, that whenever a young performer, who plays a subordinate part, is out, he can never get in again; whereas the melody of Corelli is so measured, that the number of bars, like feet in poetry, are even and correspondent; so that an inexperienced player, with a tolerable air, if thrown out, can have little difficulty in rallying.

These three admirable authors, who have so long delighted English ears, have certainly a distinct character and style of composition, wholly dissimilar from each other: they would all, doubtless, have been greatly sublimed by the performance of such a band as that lately assembled; but HANDEL in a superior degree: as the bold designs, masses of harmony, contrast, and constant resources of invention, with which his works abound, require a more powerful agency to develop and display them, than the mild strains of Corelli, or the wilder effusions of Geminiani.

HANDEL

FOURTH PERFORMANCE. 113

HANDEL sports with a band, and turns it to innumerable unexpected accounts, of which neither Corelli nor Geminiani had ever the least want or conception. He certainly acquired, by writing so long for voices and an opera band, more experience and knowledge of effects than either of these admirable violinists: so that supposing their genius to be equal, these circumstances must turn the scale in his favour. Indeed, HANDEL was always aspiring at *numbers* in his scores and in his Orchestra; and nothing can express his grand conceptions, but an omnipotent band: the generality of his productions in the hands of a few performers, is like the club of Alcides, or the bow of Ulysses, in the hands of a dwarf.

A N T H E M.

“ O sing unto the Lord, a new song,” &c.

C H O R U S.

“ The Lord shall reign for ever and ever,” &c.

After the Anthem and Chorus, which were performed with the same precision, and heard with the same unremitting eagerness of attention, as before, at the first performance in the Abbey, the

CORONATION ANTHEM.

“ Zadock the priest, and Nathan the prophet,” &c.

Terminated the exquisite performance of this day; which though augmented by the addition of two Concertos, and two Choruses, was so far from appearing long, that there seemed not to be a single hearer,

hearer, who did not regret its conclusion. And it would be ungrateful not to confess, that all the additional pieces of this day's miscellany were so judiciously chosen and admirably executed, as to reflect the highest honour upon the great Musician, who not only gave occasion to the Festival, but furnished food for the Feast.

COM.

COMMEMORATION
OF
HANDEL.

FIFTH PERFORMANCE;

THE
MESSIAH.

BY COMMAND OF HER MAJESTY,

IN WESTMINSTER-ABBAY,

SATURDAY, June 5, 1784.

COMMISSION

OF

HANDS

FIFTY PERMANENT

THE

MESSE

BY COMMAND OF HER MAJESTY

WESTMINSTER-ABBEY

SATURDAY, June 7, 1784

THOUGH this sublime production was performed here but a week before, in so perfect and magnificent a manner, that no rehearsal, previous to its repetition, was necessary to the band; yet, to gratify the wishes of many timid and infirm lovers of Music, who dreaded the croud that was likely to be assembled at a public performance, as well as to raise money for charitable purposes, another rehearsal would certainly have been announced for Friday, if it had not been prevented from taking place by the celebration of his Majesty's birth-day, on which occasion there was a certainty that the chief part of the performers and company would be engaged.

Those who attended this day's Commemoration at the Abbey were, seemingly, of a higher class than had yet appeared there; so that though the croud was somewhat less than at the preceding performance of the same Oratorio, the exhibition was more splendid. Indeed, as a spectacle, it was so magnificent to the sight, and, as a musical performance, so mellifluous and grateful to the ear, that it will be difficult for the *mind's eye* of those who were absent, to form an adequate idea of the show, or the *mental ear* of the sound, from description. Every one present must have found full employment for the two senses which afford us the most refined pleasure; as it is from the eye and the ear that intellect is fed, and the mind furnished with its best intelligence.

There was a change in the manner of executing the Music to "*Lift up your heads, O ye gates,*" which deserves to be mentioned. On the former

O

occasion,

occasion, the alternate semi-choruses were performed by *all* the voices belonging to each part; but to-day, in order to heighten the contrast, only by three of the principal singers, till about the thirty-third bar; when the whole Chorus from each side of the Orchestra, joined by all the instruments, burst out, "*He is the king of glory.*" This had a most admirable effect, and brought tears into the eyes of several of the performers. Indeed, if we may judge from the plenitude of satisfaction which appeared in the countenances of all present, this effect was not superficial, nor confined to the Orchestra.

Another new and grand effect was produced to-day in the Hallelujah, and last Chorus, "*Worthy is the Lamb,*" by the introduction of the *tromboni*, which were not used in these Choruses on the former occasion.

At the first performance of the Messiah, his Majesty expressed a desire to the earl of Sandwich of hearing the most truly sublime of all Choruses: "*Alleluiah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,*" a second time; and this gracious wish was conveyed to the Orchestra, by the waving of his lordship's wand. At this second performance of that matchless Oratorio, his Majesty was pleased to make the signal himself, with a gentle motion of his right hand in which was the printed book of the words, not only for the repetition of this, but of the final Chorus, in the last part, to the great gratification of all his happy subjects present; and, perhaps, the subjects of no sovereign prince on the globe were ever before so delighted with the effects of a royal mandate.

Thus ended the fifth and last of the performances for this memorable celebration; and so great and perfect was the pleasure which the audience had received, that those who had attended all the
five

five exhibitions, seemed most to regret this final close. There remains, however, a hope, that a performance, somewhat similar, may be annually established under the auspices of their Majesties and the same Directors, for the Benefit of the MUSICAL FUND. The plan is not yet wholly digested; but I have authority to say that their Majesties have graciously condescended to take this Society and Charity under their Royal patronage and protection; that the noblemen and baronets who so admirably directed the late Commemoration, have deigned to become in a particular manner patrons of the institution, by accepting the offices of honorary President and Vice-Presidents of this Society; and that an annual performance, on a grand and extensive scale, is in meditation, at which pieces selected from the works of the immortal HANDEL, now consecrated by time, reason, science, and universal approbation, will be performed in the most perfect and splendid manner possible.

This information may, perhaps, a little abate the despair of those lovers of Music, who imagined that such an artificial want was created, by the late grand and exquisite performances, as it was impossible ever again to gratify: regarding the concurrence of favourable circumstances which produced such an audience, and such a performance, as totally out of the reach of purchase or power of chance.

Indeed the late performances, for some time, so diminished the effect of Orchestras which always used to be thought the most considerable, that many of the performers in the Opera-band, after having been at the Abbey on the two Saturday mornings of Commemoration, imagined, at night, that half their brethren were absent, and the other half, asleep.

And though there may, perhaps, be a difference of opinion concerning the comparative excellence of particular movements in the compositions of each day, as well as the performance of individuals; yet the effects and perfection of the whole; the precision with which this musical phalanx moved, and weight and dignity it gave to every series of sounds in melody, and combination in harmony, can only be controverted by extreme ignorance, or perfect insensibility. But if, besides these, there should still be others, who, wishing to be thought more delicate in their feelings, and accurate in their decisions than the rest of mankind, are unwilling to do justice to these performances; they may surely be asked what *is* good music, and good performance, if such as produced these effects be denied that title? Let us, at least, have some superior standard of excellence erected, under which to enlist, before we abandon sensibility to the merciless severity of unprincipled critics, who seem at war, not only with candour, truth, and good taste, but with their own pleasures.

Being very desirous to know what judicious foreigners thought of these exhibitions, particularly Italians, accustomed to good Music in their churches, as well as theatres, I applied to *Count Benincasa*, a Venetian nobleman, who was then in London, and had been present at the performance of the MESSIAH in Westminster-Abbey, for information concerning the comparative grandeur and excellence of this Band, with any other which he had heard, or of which history or tradition hath preserved the memory, in his own country. As we had not time for a full discussion of the subject, when it was first proposed, *viva voce*, *Signor Benincasa* was so obliging as to honour me with his opinion in a letter, of which, before his departure,

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ture, I entreated his permission to lay an extract before the public; and it will be the more flattering to the projectors and executors of this stupendous plan, as the Count is an excellent judge of Music; having heard, read, meditated, and written on the subject, with a degree of feeling and intelligence, that is equally honourable to himself and the art (a).

London, June 7, 1784.

Dear Sir,

THE Commemoration of HANDEL, celebrated in London during the months of May and June 1784, is one of those events which every friend of humanity should reverence and exalt, for the honour of mankind. Happily for you, Sir, the friend of humanity in this sense, ought in a particular manner to be a friend to the English. It is only your great and very respectable nation that is capable of planning and executing such enterprizes as carry us back to heroic times, by their grandeur and sublimity.

De Londres ce 7 Juin, 1784.

Monsieur, et très-cher Ami,

LA Commémoration de HANDEL célébrée à Londres aux mois de Mai et Juin 1784, est un de ces événemens que tout ami des hommes doit remarquer, et exalter pour l'honneur de ses semblables. Heureusement pour vous, Monsieur, l'ami des hommes me paroît dans ce sens devoir être surtout l'ami des Anglois. C'est à votre grand et toute respectable nation, qu'il appartient d'imaginer, et d'exécuter les idées, qui peuvent nous retracer les tems héroïques par leur élévation, et par le sentiment exquis, et sublime à la fois, qu'elles déploient.

(a) See *Essai sur la Musique*, tom. iii. Par. 1780, 4to, where there are many articles concerning Italian composers and singers, with which Count Benincasa furnished the editor, that breathe the true spirit of taste, sensibility, and enthusiasm.

In the character of a true Italian, tormented by his sensibility, unless he gives it vent aloud, I neither can be silent, nor sufficiently explain to you, how much I respected the idea, and was struck with the majesty of its execution.

To honour in this manner the memory of an author, who has signalized himself so much in the divine art of Music, though a foreigner; an author who had the merit of breaking up new ground, and sowing it with the immortal seeds of knowledge and genius, which time, however, and the limits assigned by nature to our existence have not allowed him to see grow up to their present degree of perfection, is an event the most honourable to that nation which renders such public and disinterested justice to the simple and silent merit of an illustrious mortal, who is now no more. Why, alas! did not his shade hover round his portrait, and enjoy the triumph (a)?

En qualité de bon Italien que sa sensibilité tourmente, s'il ne la soulage pas en criant autour de lui, je ne puis ni me taire, ni vous dire assez, combien j'ai été touché de cet idée, et frappé de l'ensemble majestueux de son exécution.

Honorer de cette maniere la mémoire d'un auteur des plus signalés dans le bel art divin de la Musique, mais qui étoit étranger; d'un auteur, qui a eu le mérite de défricher un champ presque inculte dans ce sol, en y sémant des germes immortels de savoir, et de génie, mais à qui le tems, et les bornes assignés par la nature à tout inventeur, quelque étonnant qu'il fut, n'ont pas permis de porter son ouvrage à la perfection qu'on a plus aisément atteinte depuis; c'est un des faits les plus honorables pour la nation, qui rend une justice si clatante, si désintéressée au mérite simple et muet d'un mort illustre. Pourquoi son ombre, en voltigeant autour de son portrait, n'a-t-elle pu jouir de ce beau triomphe?

(a) The portrait of HANDEL was placed in the front of the Orchestra.

I shall long have before my eyes that beautiful temple whose pointed vaults ascend to heaven; that immense croud of the most beautiful and wealthy inhabitants of the first city in the universe; the interesting spectacle of a Royal Family, whose beauty charms, and whose goodness captivates every eye and heart; and that prodigious Orchestra, which never before had existence on the earth, and which by its admirable arrangement seemed like Music itself, to descend from the skies.

I have in vain tortured my memory to find any festival similar to this, either in history or fable. Perhaps, a noisy croud of trumpets, bells, harps, and drums, stunned the inhabitants of Babylon, when the good king Nabuchodonosor visited them in all his Asiatic pomp; perhaps, the wise king Solomon, in his great abundance of every thing, made the vaults of the temple ring with his innumerable copper vessels, rustic pipes, and brazen triangles.

J'aurai longtems devant mes yeux ce temple, qui pousse au ciel ses voutes aigües, cette foule nombreuse, l'elite des beaux et riches habitans de la premiere ville de l'univers, l'aspect toujours intéressant d'une Famille Royale, dont la beauté arrête tous les yeux, et la bonté captive tous les cœurs, cet Orchestre immense, qui n'a jamais existé auparavant sur la terre, et qui paroissoit dans son arrangement si bien entendu descendre des cieux, comme la Musique qui en est la fille.

J'ai beau tourmenter ma memoire : elle ne me rappelle rien de semblable dans tous les fastes de l'histoire, et de la fable. Peut-être une foule bruyante de trompettes, de tymbales, de guitarres étourdissoit les places de Babylone, lorsque la bonne bête du roi Nabuchodonosor les traversoit dans sa pompe Asiatique : peut-être le grand roi Salomon, qui avoit tout par milliers, faisoit-il rétentir les voutes du temple par le grand nombre de ses plats de cuivre, de ses fifres sauvages et de ses triangles d'airain.

But

But certainly, since the inexhaustible riches and variety of harmony were first displayed, I believe that it has not been possible, till now, to assemble upwards of five hundred Musicians, and which is still more extraordinary, without impeding by their number, the most accurate and finished execution.

No one, Sir, is better acquainted with the Musical Festivals of Italy than yourself. But those of the greatest magnitude at the courts of Florence, Ferrara, Parma, or Naples, during the two last centuries, offer nothing equal in number, to the spectacle in Westminster-Abbey.

You have been pleased to ask me whether the city of Venice, which has been celebrated at all times for the splendor of its public representations, has lately had any Musical exhibition approaching in magnificence to the Commemoration of HANDEL.

Mais sûrement depuis que l'harmonie a déployé ses richesses, ses variétés inépuisables, je crois qu'on n'a jamais ni pu, ni su rassembler cinq cent vingt cinq Musiciens, dont le nombre étonnant n'a pas nui à l'exécution la plus juste, la plus finie.

Personne ne connoit, comme vous, Monsieur, les fastes de la Musique Italienne : les grandes fêtes des cours de Florence, de Ferrare, de Parme aux deux derniers siècles, lors de la renaissance de la Musique, celles de Naples aux occasions des événemens de cour, ne vous ont présenté, quant au nombre, rien de comparable au spectacle de Westminster-Abbey.

Vous avez la bonté de me demander, si la ville de Vénise, qui est en possession depuis tant de siècle de donner des spectacles aussi singuliers, qu'elle, et dont le département musical est des plus considérables en Italie, n'a pas peut-être fourni dernièrement quelque exemple d'une magnificence, qui approche de la Commémoration de HANDEL.

And

And I freely own to you that we can boast of nothing equally numerous. Indeed, I am persuaded, that it requires near a million of inhabitants, and as great a passion for Music as there is at present in London, to furnish upwards of five hundred professional Musicians. Consequently, whatever genius the Italians may possess for Music, as we have no city so peopled, we can never assemble such a number of musical professors, without collecting them from many states and capitals (a).

The memory of the following events, however, is honourably preserved by the Venetians. During the residence of their most serene highnesses the Comte and Comtesse du Nord, in Venice, 1782, the republic regaled them with several

Je vous réponds d'abord très-décidément, que non, quant au nombre des Musiciens. Je suis persuadé qu'il ne faut rien moins que presque un million d'habitans, et autant de luxe dans la Musique qu'il y en a à Londres, pour mettre ensemble plus de cinq cent bons Musiciens par état. Conséquemment, quel que soit le talent des Italiens pour la Musique, comme il est très-vrai, et très-naturel, qu'on la fait en Italie mieux qu'ailleurs, cependant comme nous n'avons pas a beaucoup près aucune ville de cette force; il ne pourra jamais y avoir un assemblage pareil de professeurs en Musique, à moins qu'on ne les ramasse de plusieurs villes.

Voici, pourtant, quelques événemens Vénitiens, dont on peut conserver un souvenir honorable.

A l'occasion du séjour que LL. AA. SS. le Comte et la Comtesse du Nord firent à Vénise en 1782, la Re-

(a) Though upwards of five hundred Musicians were employed in the performance of the *Messiah*, at the Commemoration of HANDEL, yet such is the present musical strength of this country, that it could have furnished an equal number for the other end of the Abbey, had they been wanted, with Giardini, Barthelemon, Salomon, &c. at their head.

superb spectacles, of which a very exact and interesting description, interspersed with national anecdotes, has been published by an English lady, settled at Venice. Among other festivals they were presented with a *Cantata*, composed by Mortellari, a Neapolitan, and executed by a hundred Musicians, male and female. A Concert and a Ball were likewise made for the same illustrious strangers, at the theatre of Saint Benedict. The band of Musicians all dressed in a rich uniform, exceeded a hundred, and had a very good effect.

But the most singular event, was the entertainment given to the present Emperor on his first arrival in Italy; a festival as extraordinary of its kind as that of London. All the girls in the four Conservatorios, or Music-Schools, able to perform vocally or instrumentally, were collected. Signor Bertoni, maestro di Capella of one of these Conservatorios, composed a *Cantata* ex-

publique leur donna des fêtes superbes, dont il y a une description fort exacte, et très-intéressante d'ailleurs par plusieurs détails nationaux, qui est l'ouvrage d'une dame Angloise établie à Venise. Parmi ces fêtes on leur donna une Cantate composée par le sieur Mortellari, Neapolitain, maître de Musique dans cette ville, et exécutée par une centaine de Musiciens, et Musiciennes. Une autre soirée fut employée à leur donner dans le grand théâtre de St. Benoît, un Concert, et un Bal. La bande des Musiciens, tous habillés en uniforme riche, passoit la centaine, et la fête eut un très-bel effet.

Mais l'événement le plus singulier, car je le crois tout aussi unique dans ses circonstances, que celui de Londres pour le nombre, est la fête que l'on donna à S. M. L'Empereur à son premier voyage en Italie.

On tira des quatre Conservatoires, ou hôpitaux fameux, toutes les filles en état de rendre quelque partie vocale, ou instrumentale. Le Sieur Bertoni, maître Venitien très-célebre, composa à cette oc-
presly

pressly on the occasion ; and in the immense hall of the *Rezzonico* palace a band was collected, consisting of one hundred and twenty girls, uniformly, modestly, and elegantly dressed. Every kind of instrument, and every species of voice, including double-bases, wind-instruments, vocal *tenors*, and *bases*, were supplied by young female hands, and female throats. And there was no other man among them than the composer, who was a silent and inactive auditor. It is true, that the number of these fell very short of five hundred ; but will not the singularity and the difficulty of forming such an assembly of Sirens augment their value and importance ? Twenty pieces of gold may be of infinitely more value than a hundred of silver ; and, in the present case, there is, perhaps, the metallic difference which renders the two sums equal. And you will not, I hope, Sir, deny that one hundred girls may be a match for five hundred men, in Music. And pray remember

casion une cantate exprés, et l'on vit dans la salle immense du palais Rezzonico un Orchestra de cent vingt filles en uniforme modeste et gentil : toute sorte d'instrumens, tout rôle de chant, y compris la contre-basse, et les instrumens à vent, les tenori, et les basses-tailles pour le chant, tout étoit desservi par des jeunes mains, et des jeunes groziers de filles : et il n'y avoit d'autre homme au milieu d'elles, que le maître compositeur, qui ne faisoit qu'assister.—Il est vrai qu'il y a encore bien loin de ce nombre à cinq cent ; mais aussi combien la proportion, qui résulte de la singularité, et de la difficulté d'unir tant de jeunes personnes du sex n'augmente t-il pas la valeur de ce nombre ? Vingt pieces d'or peuvent en valoir plus de cent en argent : et dans nôtre cas il y a une difference de métal, pour ainsi dire, qui rend peut-être les deux sommes égales. Entre nous, avouez d'ailleurs, Monsieur, que cent filles peuvent bien tenir tête a cinq cent hommes, en Musique.

that

128. COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.

that they were very well in tune; which is the more remarkable, considering their vivacity, quarrels, little acquaintance with each other, inexperience, and the usual jealousy of rival schools. Observe, likewise, that such an Orchestra as this, independent of its Musical merit, is very interesting, and that the charms of sex is equal to the most powerful effects.

This is all, my dear friend, that my memory can furnish at present, in answer to your questions; but as I am far from those scenes of action, and as you have not allowed me time to procure better information, by letter, I will not answer for the precision of my narrative.

Notez, qu'elles allerent fort bien d'accord, ce qui est encore plus remarquable, vu leur vivacité, leur inexperience de se trouver ensemble, et les petites tracasseries qui tiennent à leur état, et à la jalousie réciproque des endroits d'où elles sortoient. Avouez de même, qu'un Orchestre pareil, independamment de son mérite Musical, est très intéressant, et que ce même mérite ainsi placé, a tout le droit au plus grands effets.

Voilà, Monsieur et très cher ami, ce que ma mémoire m'a fourni sur le champ, pour pouvoir répondre immédiatement à vos questions. Mais comme je suis loin des lieux, et que vous n'avez pas voulu me donner le tems de me faire écrire ces choses plus en détail, je ne répons pas de la dernière exactitude dans les circonstances que j'ai rapportées.

I seize

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I seize, however, with the greatest eagerness this opportunity of testifying my regard, and of assuring you that

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most humble and most obedient

Servant and Friend,

LE COMTE BENINCASA.

J'ai saisi avec le plus grand plaisir l'occasion de vous témoigner, quoique si imparfaitement, ma considération pour votre mérite personnel, mon estime pour la justesse et l'étendue de vos lumières, et, permettez-moi de dire aussi, ma reconnaissance pour votre zèle éclairé, qui a répandu tant de jour et de philosophie sur l'histoire de la Musique, de cette source intarissable de plaisir, et de sentiment, que la Divinité bienfaisante a ouverte aux mortels.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur,

Votres très-humble et très-obeissant

Serviteur, et Ami,

LE COMTE BENINCASA.

130 **COMMEMORATION OF HANDEL.**

STATE of MONEY received, in consequence
of the Five Commemoration Musical Performances.

	£.	s.	d.
Received the first day, at Westminster-Abbey, Wednesday, May 26, 1784	2966	5	0
Second Performance, in the Pantheon, Thursday, May 27	1690	10	0
Third Performance, in the Abbey, Saturday, May 29	2626	1	0
Fourth Performance—Thursday, June 3	1603	7	0
Fifth Performance—Saturday, June 5	2117	17	0
At three several Rehearsals, in Westminster-Abbey and Pantheon	944	17	10
His Majesty's most gracious donation	525	0	0
By sale of printed books of the words	262	15	0
Whole Receipts	£. 12736	12	10

Disburse-

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Disbursements of SUMS expended, and appropriated to Charitable Purposes.

	£.	s.	d.
To Mr. James Wyatt, for building, } in the Abbey and the Pantheon }	1969	12	0
Mr. Ashley for payment of the } band, &c. - - - }	1976	17	0
Rent and illumination of the Pan- } theon - - - - }	156	16	0
Advertising in Town and Country } Papers - - - }	236	19	0
Printing books of the words -	289	2	0
Door-keepers - - -	102	1	6
Use of the organ - - -	100	0	0
High, and petty constables -	100	5	0
Gratifications - - -	167	5	0
Engraving cheques and tickets, stri- } king medals, drawings, guards, } porters, and fundry incidents }	351	8	10
To the Society for decayed Musicians	6000	0	0
To the Westminster Hospital -	1000	0	0
In the hands of Redmond Simpson, } Sub-treasurer, to answer subse- } quent demands - - - }	286	6	6
Whole disbursement, errors excepted	12736	12	10

REDMOND SIMPSON (a).

(a) Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, who involved and embarrassed himself with the troublesome and complicated office of *Treasurer*, undertaking, *ex Officio*, to receive and disburse sums of money sufficient to have employed the clerks of a considerable banker's-shop, had great assistance from the zeal, diligence, and arithmetic-dexterity of Mr. Simpson, a veteran professor, no less distinguished for his abilities and probity, than active in all that tends to the prosperity of the Fund, and honour of his profession.

A P P E N -

THE PRINCE OF WALES

His Highness the Prince of Wales

is the only son of His Majesty King George VI and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

He was born on 14th June 1936 at Sandringham House, Norfolk.

His Highness is a member of the House of Commons.

He is the author of several books on the history of the British monarchy.

His Highness is also a member of the Order of the Garter.

He is the only son of His Majesty King George VI and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

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A P P E N D I X.

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A P P E N D I X.

THE sums raised in so short a space of time by the productions of one Composer only, so long after his decease, and that of almost all his personal friends and acquaintance, whose partiality could be supposed to operate on the occasion, may be numbered among the *miraculous powers* of modern Music.

And as the great share of the profits arising from the Commemoration-performances which have been bestowed on the *FUND for the Support of Decayed Musicians and their Families*, may excite curiosity concerning the nature, extent, and utility, of that institution, and its claim to so considerable a bounty, I shall here give an extract from the original statutes of the Society, followed by a few reflections on its subsequent prosperity and use.

ABSTRACT of the LAWS and RESOLUTIONS of the *FUND for the Support of Decayed Musicians and their Families*.

May 8, 1738.

“ WHEREAS a Subscription was set on foot the beginning of the last month, for establishing a *FUND for the Support of Decayed Musicians, or their Families*; which Subscription having already met with uncommon success, the Subscribers have had two General Meetings, in order to form themselves into a regular Society, by the name of

THE SOCIETY OF MUSICIANS, and have elected Twelve Governors for the present year; and also agreed to the following resolutions.

I. " That every subscriber to this Charity do pay, at least, Half a Crown a Quarter; the first payment to be made on or before Midsummer-day next (*a*).

II. " That there be annually, on the Sunday before Midsummer-day, a general meeting of the said Subscribers, to inspect the accounts, and to elect Twelve Governors by ballot; and that the said Governors, or any five of them, shall have power of receiving all monies collected for this charity, paying the same as soon as possible into the hands of Mr. *Andrew Drummond*, banker, upon account, and for the use of this SOCIETY; there to remain until it arise to a sum capable of being put out at interest in some fund secured by parliament.

III. " That the said Governors, or any five of them, shall have power of drawing upon Mr. *Andrew Drummond*, for such sums as shall be wanted for the use of this Charity, and (under such restrictions as shall be judged necessary by the SOCIETY) to dispose of the same, keeping an exact account, ready to be produced to any Subscriber when desired.

IV. " That no person, or his family, shall receive any benefit from this FUND, who has not been a professor of Music, and also a Subscriber to this Charity, at least one year; and that such person shall produce a certificate, signed by ten Subscribers, who are not Governors, of his being a proper object, before he shall be entitled to any relief from the said FUND.

(*a*) In 1766, the sum of twenty shillings per annum was required of all new-elected members, instead of ten. And the old members then agreed, almost unanimously, to pay the same sum.

V. " That

V. " That no man who has not a family, shall receive of this Fund more than Ten Shillings a week, except in case of sickness, an allowance for advice and medicines, at the discretion of the Governors for the time being.

VI. " That a weekly allowance, not exceeding Seven Shillings, be made to the widows of such Musicians (who have been Subscribers to this Fund) as are really found to be in want; but the said allowance *to cease if they marry again.*

VII. " That care shall be taken of the children of such Musicians (who have been Subscribers to this FUND) as are left destitute of other support.

VIII. " That an allowance, not exceeding Five Pounds, be made for the funeral of every such Musician (who has been a Subscriber to this FUND) as shall die without leaving effects sufficient to defray the expences of a decent interment, conditionally, that such person continued a Subscriber to this Charity until the time of his death.

IX. " That in order to make a regular distribution of this Charity, there be a meeting of the Governors the first Sunday in every month, at the Cardigan-head Tavern, near Charing-cross, or any other place that shall be agreed upon by the Governors for the time being; at which meetings the Governors shall have a power of admitting such persons to subscribe to this FUND, as they shall judge *not likely* to become soon a charge to it; and that no person be admitted a Subscriber, but such as shall be approved of by the said Governors, or a majority of them.

X. " That no allowance whatever be made to the Governors for their said Monthly meetings, but that all such meetings be at their own expence.

XI. " That all such Subscribers as are professors of Music, shall pay their subscriptions, or
cause

cause them to be paid, into the hands of the Governors, at some of the said Monthly meetings ; and that a person be appointed (with a salary of Five Pounds a year) (a) to collect the subscriptions of those persons who are not professors of Music.

XII. " That if any Subscriber neglect to pay his subscription for three quarters, he and his family shall be for ever excluded any benefit arising from this FUND.

XIII. " That the Governors shall be obliged to call a General Meeting of the Society, whenever it is required by any Twenty of the Subscribers.

XIV. " That in cases not provided for by the aforesaid Articles, the Governors, for the time being, shall have power of acting by such resolutions of their own making, as from time to time shall become necessary ; but shall be obliged to report all such resolutions to the next General Meeting, in order to have them confirmed (b)."

In 1739, a compact was formed with the Corporation of *the Sons of the Clergy*, by which the SOCIETY engaged to furnish a band, selected from their subscribing members, for the two annual performances in St. Paul's Cathedral, in consideration of the sum of Fifty pounds, which the Corporation agreed to allow each year to the SOCIETY ; and this sum has been constantly thrown into the FUND, and appropriated to charitable purposes.

(a) The Collector's salary in 1751, was augmented to 25*l.* per annum.

(b) As the most rigid œconomy was absolutely necessary during the infancy of the Society, these fundamental laws, however, illiberal and contracted they may at present appear, were, perhaps, the best which could then be allowed or devised ; but now the capital of the FUND is become so considerable, and expectations from future plans so promising, they certainly require immediate revival and extension.

Besides

Besides the casual and fluctuating income arising from Subscriptions and Benefits, the SOCIETY has been honoured with a few benefactions in the way of *Legacies*, of which the following is an account.

	£.	s.	d.
In 1758, Mr. <i>Claudio Røjere</i> , a professional Subscriber to the FUND, bequeathed to its use the sum of	100	0	0
1760, Mr. <i>Boys Waldron</i> , ditto	50	0	0
1782, Mr. <i>James Mathias</i> , merchant, an honorary Subscriber (a)	50	0	0

But the most considerable bequest which the SOCIETY has ever received from individual benevolence has been from its great benefactor, GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL, who left to it the sum of

1000 0 0

Concerning which Legacy the following account has been procured from the Minutes of the Society.

“ June 17, 1759.1

“ Dr. *Buswell*, late Gentleman of the Chapel-Royal, and one of the committee of the SOCIETY's accounts, reported, that Twelve Hundred and Fifty-four pounds stock, of the reduced Bank Annuities, now standing in the names of Mr. *Thomas Wood*, Mr. *Peter Gillier*, and Mr. *Christian Reich*, in the books of the company of the Bank of England, had been transferred to them by

(a) This worthy *Dilettante*, who was a constant benefactor to the FUND from the time of its institution to his death, exclusive of his annual subscription, as an honorary member, frequently made presents to the Charity, in money, at the time of the benefit.

The admirably full, mellow, and extensive base-voice of Mr. *James Mathias* will be long deplored by his friends, but particularly the members and frequenters of the *Crown and Anchor* Concert, who were so long and so highly delighted by its effects.

George

George Amyand, Esq. one of the executors of the last Will and Testament of **GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL**, Esq. deceased, in full satisfaction and discharge of the Legacy of One Thousand Pounds, given and bequeathed by the said **GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL**, in and by one of the Codicils to his last Will, to the Society, by the name of *The SOCIETY for the Support of Decayed Musicians and their Families*; to be disposed of in the most beneficial manner for the support of that Charity."

By these donations; by the quarterly contributions of the Members of the SOCIETY during the first years of the institution, and afterwards, when double that sum was required, by their annual payments; by honorary Subscribers; and by Benefits, from June the 17th, 1739, to June the 20th, 1784, exclusive of the Six Thousand Pounds from the Directors of the COMMEMORATION OF **HANDEL**, it appears, that in the course of forty-five years, the SOCIETY has not only accumulated a sum sufficient for the purchase of £12,000, in South-sea Annuities and three *per Cents*, but has paid to their infirm and indigent brethren and their families £24,814 14s. $\frac{3}{4}$.

And it does appear that these sums have been distributed in the most upright and intelligent manner: allowing to each claiming Member

	£.	s.	d.
For his subsistence, per month	2	2	0
For a widow	1	10	4
For each child, the father being dead	0	10	0
For schooling, from five years old to eight, per quarter	0	10	0
From eight to fourteen	0	15	0
For the funeral of a deceased pensioner	5	0	0

The

The SOCIETY, ever since its first institution, has not only been well supported by its principal Members, but by the public in general: for it appears, that the lowest annual sum received in the course of so many years, by Subscriptions and Benefit, has exceeded £400, except in 1766, when it only amounted to £134; and the highest sum, as in 1782 and 1783, has exceeded £1100.

Of these sums the money annually expended, except the two or three first years of the institution, has been from £120, to £866, which was disbursed in 1769.

The SOCIETY's present pensioners are seven infirm and decayed brethren,	} £. s. d.	} each,
at - - - - -		
Twenty-eight widows, at	} 1 10 4	} per month.
Eleven children, at - - - - -		

Other widows and children at different allowances proportioned to their situation and necessities; for the whole of which, with an allowance for the schooling of children of different ages, the SOCIETY at present, is at a certain current expence of £. 65 16 8 per month.

Or, - - - - - 790 0 0 per annum.

At their annual Benefits the principal professional Subscribers to the Charity, who are not employed in the Orchestra, are appointed to attend at the several doors and offices of the Theatre; the whole business being transacted by themselves, as regulated and ordered by a *Committee for the CONCERT*. And it seems as if no charitable institution could be more out of the reach of abuse, embezzlement, or partiality; regulated with more care, integrity, and œconomy; or have its income so immediately derived from the activity and talents

talents of its own Members. Except a small salary to the Secretary, and another to the Collector, there is no lucrative employment belonging to the institution: so that the whole produce of Benefits and Subscriptions is nett, and clear of all deduction or drawback.

Mr. *Michael Christian Festing*, and Doctor *Morrice Green*, took the lead at the time of instituting this SOCIETY, and for twelve or fourteen years afterwards. Since their decease, other Musicians, who were high in the profession, and of whose probity and honour their brethren had a good opinion, were placed, alternately, in the chair; and now, by the great accession to the FUND from the profits of the late COMMEMORATION, its capital becomes a serious and weighty concern, amounting to upwards of £22,000, in South-Sea annuities and three per Cents, which realizes, and ascertains, an income of £678 a year, exclusive of Benefit or Subscriptions.

The path therefore which the Governors and Court of Assistants have now to pursue is perfectly plain and pleasant: the power of alleviating distress and misery, of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and administering comfort to age and infirmities, is placed in their hands, without the trouble of providing the means.

SOME

SOME illiberal reflexions having had admission into the Newspapers, concerning the small gratuities that were accepted by individuals in the *Commemoration-band*, as compensations for a fortnight or three weeks labour and attendance, this seems the place for clearing them of the charge of meanness or rapacity, by an exact statement of their situation and services.

Indeed, it is natural for the Benefactors and friends of other Charities to look with an unfavourable eye upon the seeming partiality to the MUSICAL FUND, at the exclusion of all other institutions which have charity for their basis. But a little information concerning the peculiar claims of this SOCIETY, will, perhaps satisfy the reasonable, if not silence the clamorous part of the public, who may interest themselves in the disposal of the profits arising from an enterprize, wholly generated and fostered by MUSIC.

And it may be necessary to remind such persons, that the first object which occurred to the projectors of this Festival, was not the raising large sums of money; but the honour of the Musical art, and of a great and favourite professor. And happy would they have been, during the first dawnings of hope that such an idea could ever be realized, had any one to whom it was communicated been able to assure them, that the plan would *support itself*. When professional men, and particularly the Members of the MUSICAL FUND, were found willing to afford it all the support in their power, and there seemed a possibility that the expences, great as they must appear, in every point of view, would not only be defrayed by the performances in contemplation, but that there might, perhaps, be some surplus to dispose of, nothing could be more natural and reasonable than for the patrons of this enterprize to fortify zeal in
the

the performers, by the hope of becoming benefactors to their own well-instituted FUND.

But when it is remembered that public curiosity was stimulated during the progress of the undertaking, in proportion to the spontaneous ardor with which Musicians of all ranks gratuitously offered their assistance, while it was supposed that the whole celebrity would be comprised in *two performances* on one and the *same day*; that Music was the origin, Music the efficient and final cause of the Festival; and that the professors of no other science, art, or faculty, however superior in rank or utility, could, perhaps, so effectually have influenced the public to support at so uncommon an expence, any other species of exhibition: it can hardly be pronounced unreasonable that Musicians should form a wish, and their patrons be willing to gratify such a wish, that a charitable institution, founded solely for the support of their aged, infirm, and indigent brethren, as well as wives, widows, children, and orphans, involved in their distress, should be chiefly benefited by the success of this memorable celebration.

And with respect to the situation of Musicians in general, who bore a part in this COMMEMORATION, it may with the utmost truth be asserted, that no eminent professor could either perform, or attend the performances, without sacrificing very considerably to the honour of HANDEL, and prosperity of the SOCIETY. Even those that were paid received no compensation that could be deemed at all adequate to the neglect of scholars and other concerns, so many days, in order to attend public and private rehearsals, as well as the performances themselves. Indeed, those professors, who paid for admission at all the five public exhibitions, of whom there were great numbers, sustained the *least* damage. But even to them, five guineas,

guineas, and the loss consequent to four entire days absence from business, at such a time of the year, must have occasioned a considerable difference in their affairs.

The worthy noblemen and baronets, who honoured the undertaking with their countenance and direction, wisely and generously hung out honourable lures of wands, good cheer, medals, and importance, to those who, without performing, were willing to take an active part in the business; yet it is but justice to say, that the honour of HANDEL and benefit of their favourite SOCIETY, stimulated their zeal more powerfully than any other considerations. And the total disinterestedness and humanity with which the heads of the Musical profession have acted for the welfare of this institution, their solicitude, and their pride, ever since, its first establishment, is the more honourable, as, besides their quarterly contributions, attendance at general and monthly Meetings as Governors, and spending their own money at them all; the performing gratis at the annual benefit for the Charity, as well as those of the Sons of the Clergy, for the profit of the SOCIETY, are sacrifices which no other professional men can boast, merely for the maintenance and support of their infirm and unfortunate brethren and their families: as, by this means, they transfer the weight of providing for their necessities, from the shoulders of the public, to their own.

St. Martin's-street,
July 1784.

